

No. 232 / JUNE 1992



DEVELOPMENT

a guide
to the ruins

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- **Revolution** – imagine a world where disabled people called the shots.
- **Tyrannies of perfection** – euthanasia, eugenics and medical ethics.
- **Liberation** – disability and other struggles.
- **The poorest of the poor** – disability in the Third World.
- **Charity** – a dirty word. Why?



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New Internationalist exists to report on the issues of world poverty and inequality; to focus attention on the unjust relationship between the powerful and powerless in both rich and poor nations; to debate and campaign for the radical changes necessary within and between those nations if the basic material and spiritual needs of all are to be met; and to bring to life the people, the ideas and the action in the fight for world development.

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The General Election – An NI View

THE dust and the dreams have now settled after the UK General Election result on 9 April. After all the talk about a more caring, more idealistic 1990s and setting the greed ethos of the 1980s behind us, we are all having to accustom ourselves to the grim prospect of at least another four years of Conservative government.

The NI is not a party political organization. But there is no point in pretending that the re-election of the Tories does not represent a crushing blow to the agenda which this magazine tries to advance – that of justice both within and between nations.

Voters swung at the last minute towards the Conservatives, so we are told, because they feared higher taxes under the alternative parties: narrow self-interest predominated over the crying need for greater public investment. The key issues with which the NI is most passionately engaged – the health of the planet, the growing gulf between rich and poor worlds – received next to no mention in the election campaign.

Moreover any possibility of change – even of the most cautious, creeping variety – through the orthodox means of voting in a new government at an election appears to have receded absolutely. It seems perverse that a government which made so many appalling political errors in the last Parliament should have been returned – especially as 57 per cent of the vote was actually **against** the Conservatives. The worries about 'elective dictatorship' have never seemed more pertinent, even with a Prime Minister of less dictatorial tendencies than Margaret Thatcher.

We believe the need for constitutional reform – including a change in the voting system – has now become so self-evident and so absolute that it has to take precedence over the interests of any individual party. Electoral reform would release political energies that are at present untapped. Alternative ways of thinking (most notably representing a radical green agenda) could

move into the sun and people could advocate and vote for them without fearing that they would thereby let in their least favoured option by default. Government in the narrow interests of an elite would become less possible.

For these reasons we urge you to join and support Charter 88, the non-partisan movement which for the past four years has campaigned for a written constitution, freedom of information and electoral reform. Constitutional change seems, it is true, a limited and uninspiring goal beside that of changing society. But surely the one cannot now happen without the other.

The NI will continue to be idealistic. We will continue to campaign for change in the relations between rich and poor both within Britain and in the wider world. We will continue to argue for a more holistic approach to the planet and its people. And we hope we will make some small contribution towards changing the world over the next few years. But the Conservative Government just elected will make a rather greater contribution towards resisting those changes. And if we had continued on our own sweet way, appearing to be deeply concerned about Japanese society and ecology in Ladakh but not in the least bit interested in political developments at home, you would have been justified in wondering whether we were losing our grip.

You may of course still wonder about that but at least you know now that we were shell-shocked by the election result. We have, however, started to raise our eyes and our hearts towards the issues that matter over the next few years: there is no other way. And we know that in the end people in the rich world are going to have to change the way they live on this earth whether they vote for it or not – the only question is when. ■

You can reach Charter 88 at: Exmouth House, 3-11 Pine Street, London EC1R 0JH. Tel: (071) 833-1988. Fax: (071) 833-5895.

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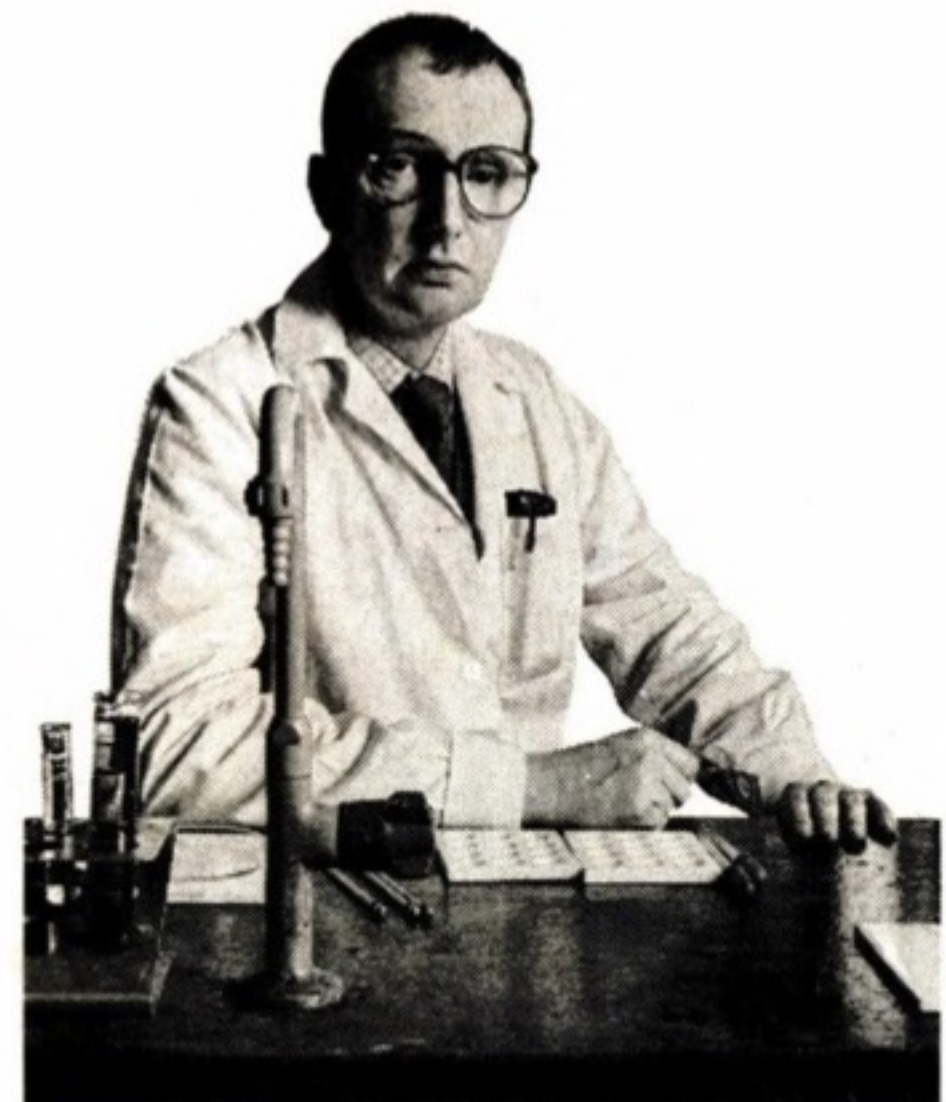
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C O N T E N T S

Development: 4
a guide to the ruins

Wolfgang Sachs argues that 'world development' is a phase of human history which has now run its course.

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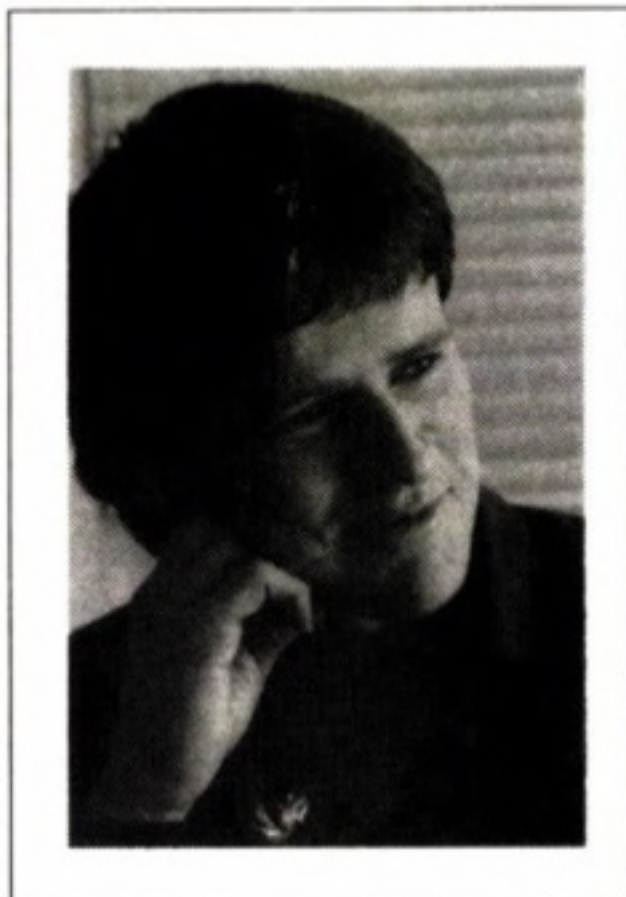
THIS MONTH'S THEME

Development

FROM THIS MONTH'S EDITOR

I've just been processing the results of a readership survey which for the first time has been carried out simultaneously in all our main readers' countries. Only the UK results are in so far and we'll report on the whole picture as soon as we have it. But one interesting section of the questionnaire asked readers to tick their three favourite departments in the magazine (*Facts*, *Country Profile* and so on). The only section which got no votes at all was this one, the *Editor's Letter*. Not a sausage. Even the ads got approval from three per cent of readers. We can only assume that you take such violent exception to the mug shot of the editor concerned that you pass on to less distasteful sights with indecent haste.

What should I say in the first *Editor's Letter* after this knowledge has been digested? The *Letter* is designed as an informal introduction to the magazine each month which at the same time offers readers a demystifying glimpse behind the scenes.



In this case the magazine has more need of an introduction than usual, since the central section of the issue has been almost entirely devoted to one person's writing – a German thinker called Wolfgang Sachs who is based at the Institute for Cultural Studies in Essen. His series of essays **On the Archaeology of the Development Idea** landed on my desk more than a year ago. It sounded pretty heavy going. German academic? Heavyweight title? Development theory? It found its way into a useful file marked 'Possible Future Issues' that meant I could postpone looking at it indefinitely. When it came round to preparing for the annual meeting at which we choose magazine subjects I plucked it out and had a look at the first paragraph, expecting not to

get any further. But I kept on reading... and by the end I knew I'd happened upon a future *NI* issue.

Sachs' ideas are dynamite. They call into question the whole phase of human activity which we are used to describing as 'development'. The *NI* has been happy enough over the years to fight under this banner even while attacking whole areas of development in practice. But perhaps the time has come for us to cast aside the underlying assumption that everyone in 'development' is working towards broadly similar ends. At the very least this issue has given the editorial team a great deal to think about.

We freely admit that Sachs' arguments make for a more challenging read than a standard *NI* issue: but the pay-off at the end is probably greater too. Last year at around this time I was introducing in this space the *Starve Trek* comic book, which was as big a departure in a lighter direction as this is in a heavier direction. We would like to feel that the *NI* is a broad enough church that it can embrace these polar opposites in terms of style. But just in case you don't agree – normal service will, as they say, be resumed next month.

Chris Brazier

Chris Brazier
for the New Internationalist Co-operative

Mirror image

I guess it's better to be a prisoner of prosperity (*The Rise of Japan*, NI 231) than of most other things. For all that you make Japan out to be an unattractive place for people with western sensibilities, you don't really tell us why the



Japanese might be passably pleased with the outcome. If we don't like what we see of ourselves in the 'distorting mirror' of Japan then we should at least acknowledge that it is not Japan that looks bad. The distance between conformity and cohesion may be small, but perhaps we in the West no longer know how to tell the difference.

Erica Old
Wellington, Aotearoa

Self interest

In your issue on *Green Justice* (NI 230) it is made clear that a transfer of wealth from North to South is necessary on moral grounds. But nowhere in the magazine is it spelt out why it is necessary on grounds of survival – for rich as well as poor.

It is not enough to realize that we have an ecological debt to the South; that it is, in a sense, subsidizing our profligate consumption; or that in 1990 the net inflow from poor countries was equivalent to \$80 for every individual in Britain. We need also to appeal to our self-interest. Unless we do, world development and 'green justice' will hardly rate a mention in the popular media, let alone become an election issue. And without this the golden opportunity presented by the 'peace dividend' to create a fairer world will be squandered.

David Simmonds
London, UK



The **New Internationalist** welcomes your letters. But please keep them short. They may be edited for purposes of space or clarity. Include a home telephone number if possible and send your letters to the nearest editorial office. The address is inside the front cover.

Catchline

We in the West run the risk of being culturally supremacist and even racist by looking at India and criticizing its practice of aborting unborn females (*Updates* NI 230) while in this and other western countries the same practice applies to unborn disabled children.

It is legal in this country to abort disabled babies right up to birth. The implication is that it is cheaper to abort disabled babies than to enable them to have the same rights and quality of life as others. As things are, disabled people end up having to rely on awful, patronizing charities!

Alison Browning
Leeds, UK

US abuse

Congratulations on your excellent coverage of human rights in NI 229. I have been studying the abuse of human rights in the US and Matthew Reiss's article 'Inside Prison Walls' is most enlightening. State-sanctioned executions of US prisoners have increased dramatically in recent times. The US struts the world

denouncing human rights abuses in other parts of the world, but keeps very quiet about its own abuses. If any protests are made the protesters are denounced as 'do-gooders' who are interfering in internal matters. The people being executed are 'criminals' – something we also hear from China, Burma and Indonesia. We cannot stand by and allow these killings to continue. It is high time the UN stepped in to stop them.

Stephanie Wilkinson
Seven Hills, Australia

Skirting Serbia

You once again skirt what used to be Yugoslavia in your *Human Rights Olympics* (NI 229). You awarded 'votes of censure' without mentioning that a quarter of the people of Serbia – the two million Albanians in Kosovo – have almost no political rights at all. No political parties or demonstrations are allowed, and the use of Albanian on local television and radio is illegal. This fascism extends to areas occupied by Serbia in the war: Croats remaining in occupied Baranja have to wear red

arm bands.

Where are the votes of censure for the wilful destruction of over a million dwellings in Croatia, in an attempt to prevent refugees returning and thus to create ethnically 'pure' areas? What of the right of the people of my city, Zagreb, and many other towns in Croatia not to have to spend days and weeks in air-raid shelters while the bombs and rockets fall? An estimated 30,000 people have been killed in this appalling war. What of their right to life?

Marc Jeffery
Zagreb, Croatia

Wake up!

For a magazine that 'exists to focus attention on the unjust relationship between the powerful and the powerless', your award of a Bronze Medal for housing to Sri Lanka (NI 229) is not only strange but positively perverse.

Sustained government bombing raids, which began in June 1990, have destroyed 6,025 houses, 37 temples, 33 schools and several hospitals. What is more alarming about the NI award (and not one 'vote of censure') is your parroting of the aid donors' argument that aid is used for development purposes. During the 1980s military expenditure has increased from two per cent to 12 per cent of the government budget, while the percentage for health and education has been halved.

NI once remarked that in ten years time the world would realize that the massacre in Sri Lanka was comparable to the genocidal reign of Pol Pot in Cambodia. But the people of Sri Lanka cannot afford to wait ten years for the rest of the world to wake up.

Campaign Against State
Terrorism in Sri Lanka (CASTIS)
Manchester, UK

Mea culpa

I was intrigued to learn from Ms Roberts (*Letters* NI 228) that, as a man, I am personally responsible for everything that's wrong in the world. Perhaps she could furnish me with details of what I did, who to, and where and when I did it.

Dick Bird
Ankara, Turkey

Predator and prey

In the non-human world the animals become aware of the predators and learn to defend themselves very effectively by forming organized groups. So do human beings – so far as non-human beings are concerned, but not where the predators are members of the human race. Non-human predators do not have the advantage of literacy. So they cannot do what human predators do – inject into the minds of their prey ideas which are intended to obscure the real situation. A practice in which, unfortunately for their prey, they have been very successful so far in the course of history.

Cyril Cryer-Whitehead
Milton Keynes, UK



Due credit

I'd like to thank Maggie Black (NI 228) for setting the record straight regarding the founding of the Famine Relief Committees by a woman – Edith Page – in 1942. But credit is due to Oxfam for getting it right after 50 years in their Anniversary Resolution which states: 'Most poverty is man-made...'

Recognizing the problem can take us a long way to finding the solution...

Ann Gibb
Southampton, UK

Eurocentric

A notable oversight of your *Feminism* issue (NI 227) was the failure to recognize that the women's liberation movement may have had its historic origins in India, and especially in Buddhist thought, rather than in Greece. Even if disputed, it is surprising that you should make hardly any reference to the extensive scholarly literature on the position of women in non-western societies. It would, indeed, be a pity if the NI were to succumb like many other publications to the obvious limitations of Eurocentric thinking, which tends to locate the origins of *all* knowledge in Greco-Roman thinking.

Prof DL Jayasuriya,
Perth, Australia

Is this progress?

A lady friend of mine, when faced with a decision, brightly proclaims 'I'll ask rabbit' or 'I'll ask bear'. This is something from one of the many New Age shaman gatherings. I would never dream of making fun of her or any woman who is taking one of the many paths to enlightenment. Erica Simmons, in her insulting article on the Bly-style encounter groups (NI 227) answers the question 'What will you do with your increasing feminine power?' with 'Why, grind the bastards into the dust, just like they've done to us'. This is progress?

John L Finley
Kodiak, Alaska, US

The views expressed on the letters page are not necessarily those of the NI.

LETTER from LAHORE

The fixer

He learned his healing skills from wrestlers and he applies them to monkeys and people alike. Maria del Nevo watches Baba Mannah at work.

WHILE playing in the narrow allies of Gandhipark, one of Lahore's poorer neighbourhoods, the children one day witnessed a fight between a monkey and a stray dog. The monkey was owned by a man who visited the area frequently to entertain the children with the animal's skillful tricks. But that day the children stood looking on in horror as the stray dog tore at the monkey's body with its sharp teeth.

'Take him to Babaji,' they shouted to the owner, once the dog had been scared off by the stones they threw. 'Babaji will cure him.'

So the monkey was carried off in the arms of its owner, and when Babaji saved the life of the monkey the children rejoiced. The news of Babaji's healing hands spread like wildfire.

Seventy-nine-year-old Baba Mannah came to Pakistan from Gurdaspur in India at Partition and stayed as a refugee in a village near the border, where he learned to fix dislocated joints from one of the older *pehelwans* (wrestlers) who are famous in Pakistan for their skill at fixing fractures. Baba Mannah learned fast and when he later reached Lahore he started up a practice which eventually brought him patients from far and wide.

He practices in a small room adjacent to his house where his wife, sons, daughters-in-law, daughters and grandchildren live. The room is filled with huge sacks of rice which he sells to supplement his monthly income. A *charpoy* (string cot) stands up against one wall and on the floor there is a disused sackcloth where he sits in his traditional *dhoti*, *khurta* and turban. Beside him a collection of jars and bottles is filled with lotions from the bark of the perhwan tree, ground linseed, cloves, *jalatir* (spice) and *rattanjot* (herb).

I crouch down in a corner and watch as Baba Mannah deftly bandages the hand of Khurshid Bibi, a school teacher. She has fallen and fractured her hand. She tells him how she is unable

to make chapatti for her husband and finds it difficult to wash out heavy clothes or even write and prepare her classes. As she talks she receives sympathetic murmurs from Baba Mannah, who before finishing the treatment gives her gentle but firm instructions to rest and to try and persuade her husband to assist her by buying chapattis from the bazaar.

All day there is a stream of visitors knocking on his door: villagers from farmlands surrounding Lahore; professors from the city's colleges; business people; locals from his own neighbourhood and even women from the palatial houses of Lahore's suburbs, who crouch down in their fine silks on the sackcloth beside Baba Mannah.

They have complete confidence in his method of treatment. Many of them would never even consider going to hospitals, where waiting lists are long, treatment and prescriptions are expensive and the doctors are overworked and impersonal. 'Baba Mannah puts me at ease,' says Khurshid Bibi, 'and I trust him... The old styles are better.'

'People will always come to people like me,' says Baba Mannah with assurance, 'because our form of treatment is effective and they have faith in our techniques... Our style will never die out because we elders will

pass our knowledge on to our offspring. Our treatment doesn't change with experimentation because we don't need to experiment... So the people trust us.'

As I leave Baba rests one of his strong hands on my head and recites a long blessing for my good health, safety and prosperity. He watches me walk away up the dimly lit alley of Gandhipark. Feeling wonderfully soothed by the old man's company, I understand why people still believe the old styles to be better. ■

Maria del Nevo is a former NI staff member who now lives and works in Lahore.



MIRIAM MCCURDY



P. J. POLYP

Development : a guide to the ruins

*World development is like apple pie – nobody can be against it. Or can they? After three decades of development it is time to ask whether it has done much more than impose Westernization on the whole world. **Wolfgang Sachs** begins his seven-chapter excavation of the development idea by explaining how, even at its birth, it was designed to remake the world in the image of the United States of America.*

RUINED buildings hide their secrets under piles of earth and rubble. Archaeologists, shovel in hand, work through layer upon layer to reveal underpinnings and thus discover the origins of a dilapidated monument. But ideas can also turn out to be ruins with their foundations covered by years or even centuries of sand.

I believe that the idea of development stands today like a ruin in the intellectual landscape, its shadows obscuring our

vision. It is high time we tackled the archaeology of this towering conceit, that we uncovered its foundations to see it for what it is: the outdated monument to an immodest era.

A world power in search of a mission

Wind and snow stormed over Pennsylvania Avenue on 20 January 1949 when, in his inauguration speech before Congress, US President Harry Truman defined the largest part of the world as 'underdeveloped

areas'. There it was, suddenly, a permanent feature of the landscape, a pivotal concept which crammed the immeasurable diversity of the globe's South into a single category – underdeveloped. For the first time, the new worldview was thus announced: all the peoples of the earth were to move along the same track and aspire to only one goal – development.

And the road to follow lay clearly before the President's eyes: 'Greater production is the key to prosperity and peace'.

After all, was it not the US which had already come closest to this utopia? According to that yardstick, nations fall into place as stragglers or lead runners. And 'the United States is pre-eminent among nations in the development of industrial and scientific techniques'. Clothing self-interest in generosity, Truman outlined a program of technical assistance designed to 'relieve the suffering of these peoples' through 'industrial activities' and 'a higher standard of living'.

Looking back after 40 years, we recognize Truman's speech as the starting gun in the race for the South to catch up with the North. But we also see that the field of runners has been dispersed, as some competitors have fallen by the wayside and others have begun to suspect that they are running in the wrong direction.

The idea of defining the world as an economic arena originated in Truman's time; it would have been completely alien to colonialism. True, colonial powers saw themselves as participating in an economic race, with their overseas territories as a source of raw materials. But it was only after the Second World War that they had to stand on their own and compete in a global economic arena.

For Britain and France during the colonial period, dominion over their colonies was first of all a cultural obligation which stemmed from their vocation to a civilizing mission. British imperial administrator Lord Lugard had formulated the doctrine of the 'double mandate': economic profit of course, but above all the responsibility to elevate the 'coloured races' to a higher level of civilization. The colonialists came as masters to rule over the natives; they did not come as planners to start the spiral of supply and demand.

Development as imperative

According to Truman's vision, the two commandments of the double mandate converge under the imperative of 'economic development'. A change in worldview had thus taken place, allowing the concept of development to rise to a standard of universal rule. In the US's Development Act of 1929, still influenced by colonial frameworks, 'development' applied only to the first duty of the double mandate – the economic exploitation of resources such as land, minerals and wood products; the second duty was defined as 'progress' or 'welfare'. At this time it was thought that only resources could be developed, not people or societies.

It was in the corridors of the State Department during World War Two that 'cultural progress' was absorbed by 'economic mobilization' and development was

enthroned as the crowning concept. A new worldview had found its succinct definition: the degree of civilization in a country could be measured by the level of its production. There was no longer any reason to limit the domain of development to resources only. From now on, people and

THE idea of development was once a towering monument inspiring international enthusiasm. Today the structure is falling apart and in danger of total collapse.

whole societies could, or even should, be seen as the object of development.

Truman's imperative to develop meant that societies of the Third World were no longer seen as diverse and incomparable possibilities of human living arrangements but were rather placed on a single 'progressive' track, judged more or less advanced according to the criteria of the Western industrial nations.

Such a reinterpretation of global history was not only politically flattering but also unavoidable, since underdevelopment can only be recognized in looking back from a state of maturity. Development without predominance is like a race without direction. So the pervasive power and influence of the West was logically included in the proclama-

tion of development. It is no coincidence that the preamble of the UN Charter ('We, the peoples of the United Nations...') echoes the Constitution of the US ('We, the peoples of the United States...'). Development meant nothing more than projecting the American model of society onto the rest of the world.

Truman really needed such a reconceptualization of the world. The old colonial world had fallen apart. The United States, the strongest nation to emerge from the War, was obliged to act as the new world power. For this it needed a vision of a new global order.

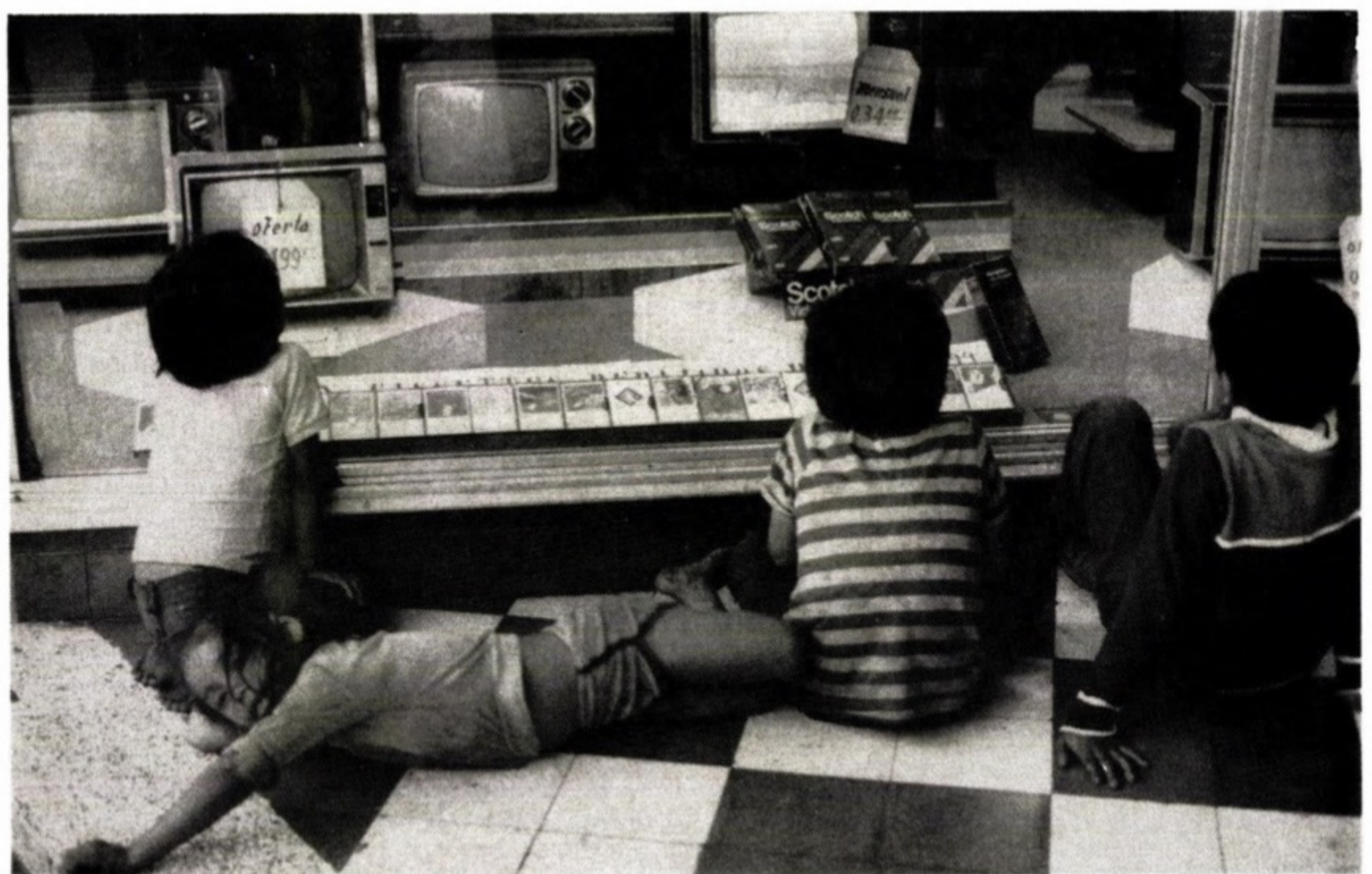
The concept of development provided the answer because it presented the world as a collection of homogeneous entities, held together not through the political dominion of colonial times, but through economic interdependence. It meant the independence process of young countries could be allowed to proceed because they automatically fell under the wing of the US anyway when they proclaimed themselves to be subjects of economic development.

Development was the conceptual vehicle which allowed the US to behave as the herald of national self-determination while at the same time founding a new type of worldwide domination – an anti-colonial imperialism.

Regimes in search of a raison d'être

The leaders of the newly founded nations – from Nehru to Nkrumah, Nasser to Sukarno – accepted the image that the North had of the South, and internalized it as their self-image. Underdevelopment

Enthralled by an illusion. Street children in Guatemala City know they are on the 'underdeveloped' side of the screen.



CHRIS STEELE-PERKINS / MAGNUM

became the cognitive foundation for the establishment of nations throughout the Third World.

The Indian leader Nehru (incidentally, in opposition to Gandhi) made the point in 1949: 'It is not a question of theory; be it communism, socialism or capitalism, whatever method is most successful, brings the necessary changes and gives satisfaction to the masses, will establish itself on its own... Our problem today is to raise the standard of the masses...' Economic development as the primary aim of the state; the mobilization of the country to increase output: this beautifully suited the Western concept of the world as an economic arena.

As in all types of competition, this one rapidly produced its professional coaching staff. The World Bank sent off the first of its innumerable missions in July 1949. Upon their return from Colombia, the 14 experts wrote: 'Short-term and sporadic efforts can hardly improve the overall picture. The



E. BOUBAT / CAMERA PRESS

These Vietnamese people might have been struck by the irony of Robert McNamara, President of the World Bank in the 1970s, showing concern for the rural poor. He was previously US Secretary of Defense during the Vietnam War.

vicious circle... can only be broken seriously through a global relaunching of the whole economy, along with education, health and food sectors.'

To increase production at a constant level entire societies had to be overhauled. Had there ever existed a more zealous state objective? From then on, an unprecedented flowering of agencies and administrations came forth to address all aspects of life – to count, organize, mindlessly intervene and sacrifice, all in the name of 'development'. Today, the scene appears more like collective hallucination. Traditions, hierarchies,

mental habits – the whole texture of societies – have all been dissolved in the planner's mechanistic models.

But in this way the experts were able to apply the same blueprint for institutional reform throughout the world, the outline of which was most often patterned on the American Way of Life. There was no longer any question of letting things 'mature for centuries', as in the colonial period. After the Second World War, engineers set out to develop whole societies – and to accomplish the job in a few years or, at the most, a couple of decades.

Shocks and erosion

In the late 1960s, deep cracks began to appear in the building – the trumpeted promises of the development idea were built on sand! The international elite, which had been busy piling one development plan on another, knitted its collective brow. At the International Labour Office and the World Bank, experts suddenly realized that growth policies were not working. Poverty increased precisely in the shadow of wealth, unemployment proved resistant to growth, and the food situation could not be helped through building steel factories. It became clear that the identification of social progress with economic growth was pure fiction.

In 1973, Robert McNamara, the President of the World Bank, summed up the state of affairs: 'Despite a decade of unprecedented increase in the gross national product... the poorest segments of the population have received relatively little benefit... The upper 40 per cent of the population typically receive 75 per cent of all income.' No sooner had he admitted the failure of Truman's strategy, than he immediately proclaimed another development strategy with its new target group – rural development and small farmers. The logic of this conceptual operation is obvious

enough: it meant the idea of development did not have to be abandoned; indeed, its field of application was enlarged. Similarly, in rapid succession during the 1970s and 1980s unemployment, injustice, the eradication of poverty, basic needs, women and the environment were turned into problems and became the object of special strategies.

The meaning of development exploded, increasingly covering a host of contradictory practices. The development business became self-propelling: whatever new crisis arose, a new strategy to resolve

it could be devised. Furthermore, the background motive for development slowly shifted. A rising environmental chorus noted that development was not meant to promote growth, but to protect against it. Thus the semantic chaos was complete, and the concept torn to shreds.

A concept full of emptiness

So development has become a shapeless amoeba-like word. It cannot express anything because its outlines are blurred. But it remains ineradicable because it appears so benign. They who pronounce the word denote nothing but claim the best of intentions.

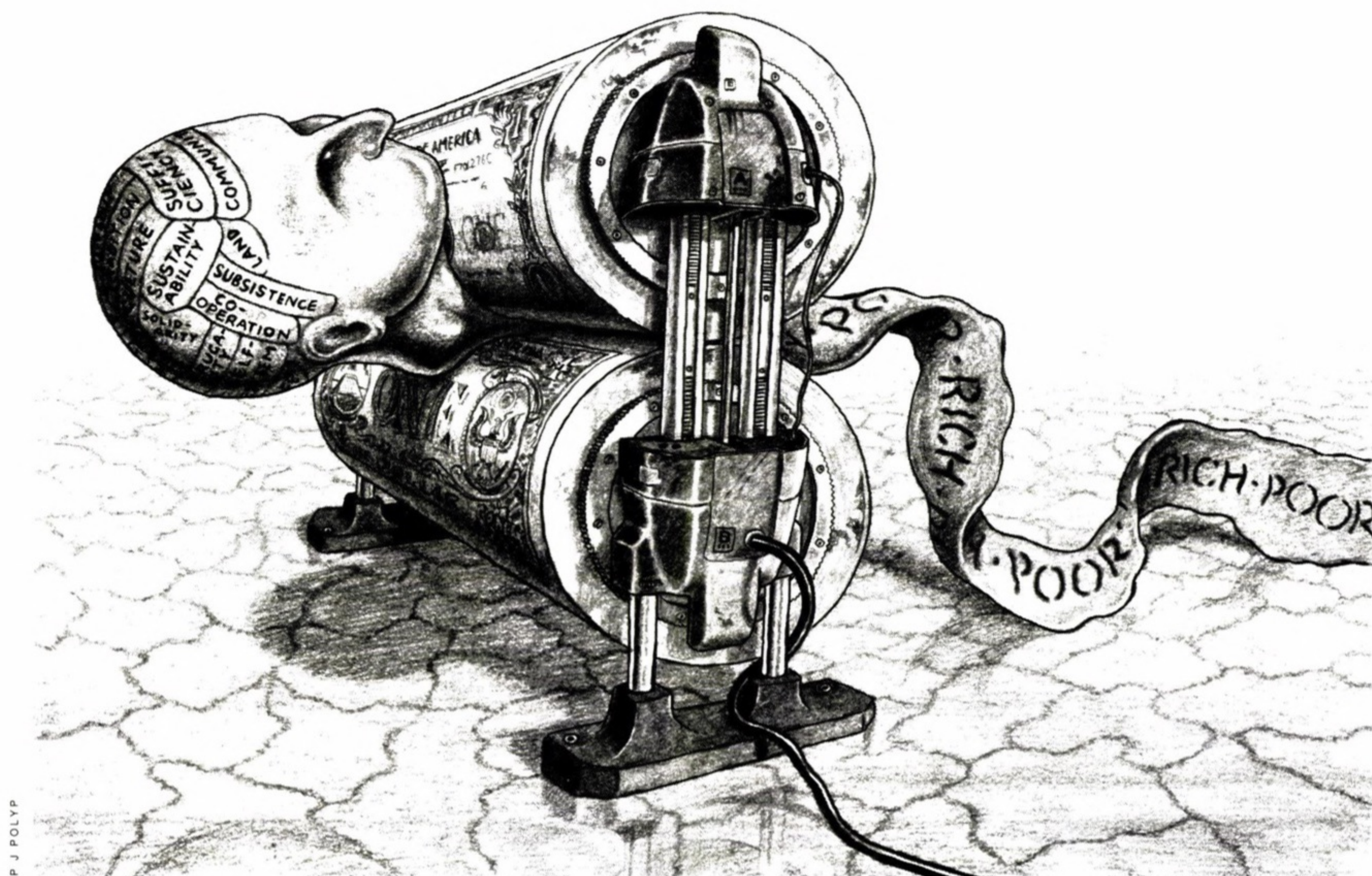
Development thus has no content but it does possess a function: it allows any intervention to be sanctified in the name of a higher, evolutionary goal. Watch out! Truman's assumptions travel like blind passengers under its cover. However applied, the development idea always implies that there are lead runners who show the way to latecomers; it suggests that advancement is the result of planned action. Even without having economic growth in mind, whoever talks of development evokes notions of universality, progress and feasibility, showing that they are unable to escape Truman's influence.

This heritage is like a weight which keeps one treading in the same spot. It prevents people in Michoacan, Gujarat or Zanzibar from recognizing their own right to refuse to classify themselves as 'underdeveloped'; it stops them rejoicing in their own diversity and wit. Development always entails looking at other worlds in terms of what they lack, and obstructs the wealth of indigenous alternatives.

Yet the contrary of development is not stagnation. From Gandhi's *swaraj* to Zapata's *ejidos*¹, we see that there are striking examples of change in every culture. Distinctions such as backward/ advanced or traditional/modern have in any case become ridiculous given the dead end of progress in the North, from poisoned soils to the greenhouse effect. Truman's vision will thus fall in the face of history, not because the race was fought unfairly, but because it leads to the abyss.

The idea of development was once a towering monument inspiring international enthusiasm. Today, the structure is falling apart and in danger of total collapse. But its imposing ruins still linger over everything and block the way out. The task, then, is to push the rubble aside to open up new ground. ■

¹ For an explanation of Gandhi's beliefs see Page 15. Mexican revolutionary Emiliano Zapata advocated a return to the ancient Indian tradition of community rather than individual land ownership. This *ejidos* idea was to some extent implemented in the Mexican land reform of the 1930s.



The discovery of poverty

How 'the poor' were invented by the West... How the development idea was rescued from its first crisis... The vital difference between frugality and destitution.

I COULD have kicked myself afterwards. Yet my remark had seemed the most natural thing on earth at the time. It was six months after Mexico City's catastrophic earthquake in 1985 and I had spent the whole day walking around Tepito, a dilapidated quarter inhabited by ordinary people but threatened by land speculators. I had expected ruins and resignation, decay and squalor, but the visit had made me think again: there was a proud neighbourly spirit, vigorous build-

ing activity and a flourishing shadow economy.

But at the end of the day the remark slipped out: 'It's all very well but, when it comes down to it, these people are still terribly poor.' Promptly, one of my companions stiffened: '*No somos pobres, somos Tepitanos!*' (We are not poor people, we are Tepitans). What a reprimand! Why had I made such an offensive remark? I had to admit to myself in embarrassment that, quite involuntarily,

the clichés of development philosophy had triggered my reaction.

Inventing the low-income bracket

'Poverty' on a global scale was discovered after the Second World War; before 1940 it was not an issue. In one of the first World Bank reports, dating from 1948-9, the 'nature of the problem' is outlined: 'Both the need and potential for development are plainly revealed by a single set of statistics. According to the UN Bureau

of Statistics, average income per head in the United States in 1947 was over \$1400, and in another 14 countries ranged between \$400 and \$900. For more than half of the world's population, however, the average income was less – and sometimes much less – than \$100 per person. The magnitude of this discrepancy demonstrates not only the urgent need to raise living standards in the underdeveloped countries, but also the enormous possibilities to do just this...

Whenever 'poverty' was mentioned at all in the documents of the 1940s and 1950s, it took the form of a statistical measurement of per-capita income whose significance rested on the fact that it lay ridiculously far below the US standard.

When size of income is thought to indicate social perfection, as it does in the economic model of society, one is inclined to interpret any other society which does not follow that model as 'low-income'. This way, the perception of poverty on a global scale was nothing more than the result of a comparative statistical operation, the first of which was carried out only in 1940 by the economist Colin Clark. As soon as the scale of incomes had been established, order reigned on a confused globe: horizontally, such different worlds as those of the Zapotec people of Mexico, the Tuareg of North Africa and the Rajasthani of India could be classed together, whilst a vertical comparison to the 'rich' nations demanded relegating them to a position of almost immeasurable inferiority.

In this way 'poverty' was used to define whole peoples, not according to

what they are and want to be, but according to what they lack and are expected to become. Economic disdain had thus taken the place of colonial contempt.

Moreover, this conceptual operation provided a justification for intervention: wherever low income is the problem, the only answer can be 'economic development'. There was no mention of the idea that poverty might also result from oppression and thus demand liberation. Or that a culture of sufficiency might be essential for long-term survival. Or even less that a culture might direct its energies towards spheres other than the economic.

No, as it was in the industrial nations so it was to be in all the others: poverty was diagnosed as a lack of spending power crying to be banished through economic growth. Under the banner of 'poverty' the enforced reorganization of many societies into money economies was subsequently conducted like a moral crusade. Who could be against it?

Descent to the biological minimum

Towards the end of the 1960s, when it was no longer possible to close one's eyes to the fact that 'economic development' was patently failing to help most people



Inside looking out – people in Manila's shanty towns that 'economic growth' has never reached.

achieve a higher standard of living, a new conception of 'poverty' was required. 'We should strive,' McNamara of the World Bank stated in 1973, 'to eradicate absolute poverty by the end of the century. That means in practice the elimination of malnutrition and illiteracy, the reduction of infant mortality and the raising of life-expectancy standards to those of the developed nations.'

Whoever lived below an externally defined minimum standard was declared 'absolutely poor'; the yardstick of per-capita income was thrown onto the trash heap of development concepts. Two shifts in the focus of the international discussion of poverty were responsible for this. On the one hand, attention switched to yawning social gulfs within societies, which had been completely blurred by national averages. On the other, income revealed itself to be a rather blunt indicator of the actual living conditions of those not fully integrated into a money economy.

These new efforts to understand poverty in terms of quality of life emerged out of disappointment at the results of the stimulation of growth, but they brought their own form of reductionism. Since the first attempts in England at the turn of the century, the calculation of an absolute poverty line has been based on nutrition: the absolute poor are those whose intake of foods does not exceed a certain minimum of calories.

The trouble with such definitions is that they reduce the living reality of hundreds of millions of people to an animalistic description. In an attempt to find an objective and meaningful criterion, the ground was cleared for a conception of reality which reduces the rich variety of what people might hope and struggle for to one bare piece of data about survival. Can a lower common denominator be imagined?

A kiss from a comrade in the hills of Guatemala. Being 'poor' is not the same as being miserable.



No wonder the measures taken in response – ranging from deliveries of grain to people who eat rice to literacy campaigns in regions where the written word is altogether uncommon – have all too often been insensitive and shown no regard for people's self-esteem.

Reducing lifeworlds to calorie levels, to be sure, makes the international administration of development aid a lot easier. It allows a neat classification of the clientèle (without which worldwide strategies would be pointless) and it serves as permanent proof of a state of global emergency (without which doubt might be cast on the legitimacy of some development agencies).

This readjusted idea of poverty enabled the development paradigm to be rescued at the beginning of the 1970s. In its official version, the fulfilment of basic needs strictly called for economic growth, or at least growth 'with redistribution'. The link to the previous decade's dogma of growth was thus established.

Poor is not necessarily poor

Binary divisions, such as healthy/ill, normal/abnormal or, more pertinently, rich/poor, are like steamrollers of the mind; they level a multiform world, completely flattening anything which does not fit. The stereotyped talk of 'poverty' has disfigured the different, indeed contrasting, forms of poverty beyond recognition. It fails to distinguish, for example, between frugality, destitution, and scarcity.

Frugality is a mark of cultures free from the frenzy of accumulation. In these, the necessities of everyday life are mostly won from subsistence production with only the smaller part being purchased on the market. To our eyes, people have rather meagre possessions; maybe the hut and some pots and the Sunday costume, with money playing only a marginal role. Instead, everyone usually has access to fields, rivers and woods, while kinship and community duties guarantee services which elsewhere must be paid for in hard cash. Despite being in the 'low-income bracket', nobody goes hungry. What is more, large surpluses are often

spent on jewellery, celebrations or grandiose buildings. In a traditional Mexican village, for example, the private accumulation of wealth results in social ostracism – prestige is gained precisely by spending even small profits on good deeds for the community. Here is a way of life maintained by a culture which recognizes and cultivates a state of sufficiency; it

D EVELOPMENT politicians have viewed 'poverty' as the problem and 'growth' as the solution ... and often produced destitution by bringing multifarious cultures of frugality to ruin.

only turns into demeaning 'poverty' when pressurized by an accumulating society.

Destitution, on the other hand, becomes rampant as soon as frugality is deprived of its foundation. Along with community ties, land, forest and water are the most important prerequisites for subsistence without money. As soon as they are taken away or destroyed, destitution lurks. Again and again, peasants, nomads and tribals have fallen into misery after being driven from their land, savannahs and forests. Indeed the first state policies on poverty, in sixteenth-century Europe, were a response to the sudden appearance of vagabonds and mendicancy provoked by enclosures of the land – it had tradi-

tionally been the task of communities to provide for widows and orphans, the classical cases of unmaintained poor people.

Scarcity derives from modernized poverty. It affects mostly urban groups caught up in the money economy as workers and consumers whose spending power is so low that they fall by the wayside. Not only does their predicament make them vulnerable to the whims of the market, but they also live in a situation where money assumes an ever-increasing importance. Their capacity to achieve through their own efforts gradually fades, while at the same time their desires, fuelled by glimpses of high society, spiral towards infinity; this scissor-like effect of want is what characterizes modern poverty. Commodity-based poverty, still described as 'the social question' in the nineteenth century, led to the welfare state and its income and employment policy after the world economic crisis of 1929. Precisely this view of poverty, influenced by Keynes and the New Deal, shaped the development ideas of the post-war era.

More frugality, less destitution

Up until the present day, development politicians have viewed 'poverty' as the problem and 'growth' as the solution. They have not yet admitted that they have been largely working with a concept of poverty fashioned by the experience of commodity-based need in the Northern hemisphere. With the less well-off *homo oeconomicus* in mind, they have encouraged growth – and often produced destitution by bringing multifarious cultures of frugality to ruin. For the culture of growth can only be erected on the ruins of frugality; and so destitution and dependence on commodities are its price.

Is it not time after 40 years to draw a conclusion? Whoever wishes to banish poverty must build on efficiency; a cautious handling of growth is the most important way of fighting poverty.

It seems my friend from Tepito knew of this when he refused to be labelled 'poor'. His honour was at stake, his pride too; he clung to his Tepito form of sufficiency, perhaps sensing that without it there loomed only destitution or never-ending scarcity of money.

John Maynard Keynes and the Jarrow Marchers. The Great Depression of the 1930s conditions the West's ideas about 'poverty'.



SUCCESS!

The big idea of global development may be in doubt. But don't despair. Here we focus on four of the many ordinary people who have taken the initiative, rejecting the parts of the traditional development model that are not appropriate and shaping their own futures.

TSEWANG RIGZIN LAGRUK is President of the Ladakh Ecological Development Group which tries to follow a completely different model of development – one based on the ecological common sense of Ladakh's traditional culture (similar to that of neighbouring Tibet).

In the last 20 years Ladakh has changed more than in the previous 200. We've seen our children start to reject the old ways. All the outside influences have had a serious effect on the environment and the traditional sense of community.

Nonetheless I think there are signs of hope. It's a strange thing, but the new contact with the West has made us more conscious of the strengths of our old culture – so many people these days feel a renewed pride in being Ladakhi.

In my group we've had a lot of success with low-level technologies like solar greenhouses which give us green vegetables in the middle of winter. These improve people's standard of living without their leaving the land.

I stopped using chemical fertilizers 10 years ago when I realized they were damaging the land. Recently many farmers have gone back to organic methods – partly because they've seen the chemicals' effects and partly because of our educational work.

When we won the Right Livelihood Award (the Alternative Nobel Prize) in 1984, I went to Stockholm to receive it. What I saw of Sweden and England was very interesting. But overall I'm happy to be a Ladakhi. It's a calmer, quieter place to live. I just hope it stays that way.

ATO HAILU WOLDEMARIAM is an Ethiopian farmer working with traditional seeds that have been threatened with extinction – the modern 'global' varieties are much more vulnerable to drought. Supported by Canada's Unitarian Service Committee, farmers like Ato have successfully multiplied 56 traditional varieties of wheat.

We are lucky that we still have the seeds and are able to grow the wheat that our grandparents grew. The new varieties cost a lot to grow because of the fertilizers and pesticides. Our old varieties always produce a reliable harvest. We even succeeded in increasing our harvest by selecting the better seeds for next season's planting.

I still grow the new varieties alongside the old. If I do not have the money to buy the fertilizer or if there is a drought, I can count on the old seed to produce. Other farmers in our village were persuaded to plant only modern varieties and had problems with drought and pests. Now they want to follow me.

In the beginning I needed to be convinced to join the programme to grow the seed. Now I realize just how valuable the old seeds are.



KUMIKO GOTO is a member of the Seikatsu Club Consumer Co-operative in Japan which has been described as 'probably the most significant example of Green economic practice in the industrialized world'. The Club distributes 400 products, all produced according to rigorous ecological and social criteria, to 170,000 member families. The word Seikatsu means simply 'life'.

I joined the Seikatsu Club almost 10 years ago when I came back to Tokyo with my three daughters. In the first few years I found belonging to the Club really helpful. You see, everything was delivered to my house and so I didn't have to go shopping. Then, as my children grew up, I took responsibility for Seikatsu Club activities. First I was receiving all the goods, then I became a leader of the *han* (the local group), then I started going out to meetings and conferences. So now I feel like I'm helping other people – kind of paying back my debt.

I think joining the Seikatsu Club made me think what we have to do about food, air, water and the natural environment – not in a political or social sense but in the sense of a simple citizen. As a mother, I want to have something good for my babies. So then we have to think about the manufacturer and the distribution system, and we also have to think

about the people in the *han*, our neighbours. I really learned from my daily living about politics and the economy, which I really didn't care so much about before. Politicians and businesspeople don't look at what folk really need in their lives. There should be some way that we can live in a co-operative way and that's what the Seikatsu Club is.

Plus buying through Seikatsu Club is much cheaper!



VILMA BELTRAN is leader of a group of community-run soup kitchens in the shanty town of Villa El Salvador, in Peru. Villa has been transformed over the last 20 years from desert land into a thriving self-governing and highly democratic community of 300,000 people.

When I arrived here I was 22. When we came we thought it was going to be like any other shanty town. But we began to have meetings on our block because we were concerned about not having light, water – we had nothing.

I'm proud of living in Villa because, besides the fact that, as everybody knows, it is very well organized, what we have is thanks to the women. Being organized helps us strengthen ourselves against violence. Violence comes at us from all sides, from the Government as well as from Sendero Luminoso [the Maoist guerilla movement which hates the poor to organize independently]. The solidarity helps us to go on.

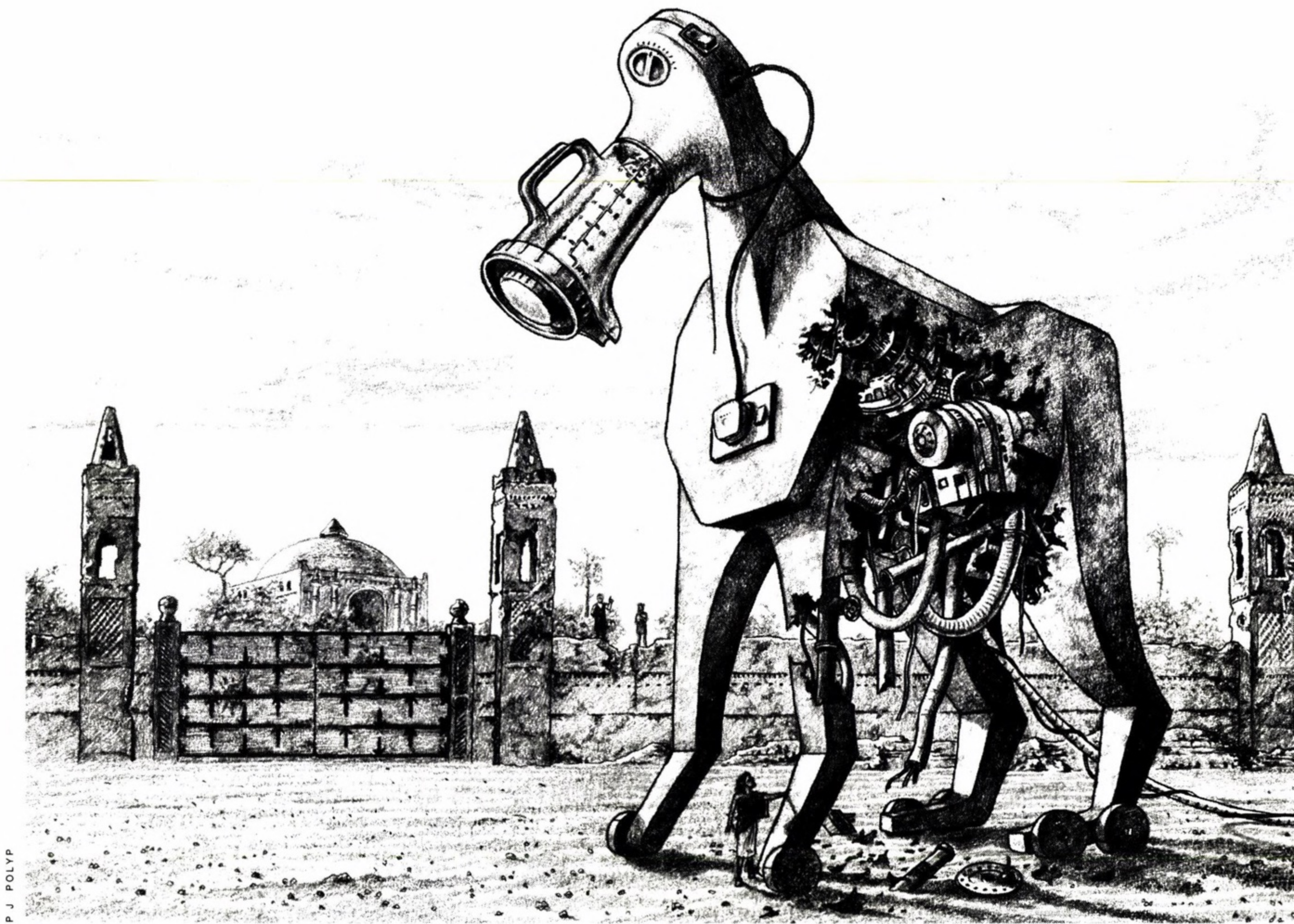
We co-ordinate to look for ways to make our lives better, like offering a more balanced diet. We're also making a co-ordinated effort against cholera by distributing to all the soup kitchens first-aid kits that include water purification pills.

But the most important thing here at the moment is that so many of our husbands are out of work, and the only solution is the soup kitchen. We don't do it for profit, we do it out of necessity. And the soup kitchen is not, as Sendero says, a cushion for the Government. It's just that right now we can't let ourselves, or our children, starve to death.

I've visited other shanty towns and they also have soup kitchens. But we've achieved more because we're so organized. Villa is an example to other shanty towns now. They've seen what we've achieved and they are copying us.



PHOTOS : STEVE MCCLURE; VERA A. LENTZ.



Technology as a Trojan horse

How the tools we use control us... The regimented world that lies behind each electric switch ... The fragile magic that holds the Third World spellbound ...

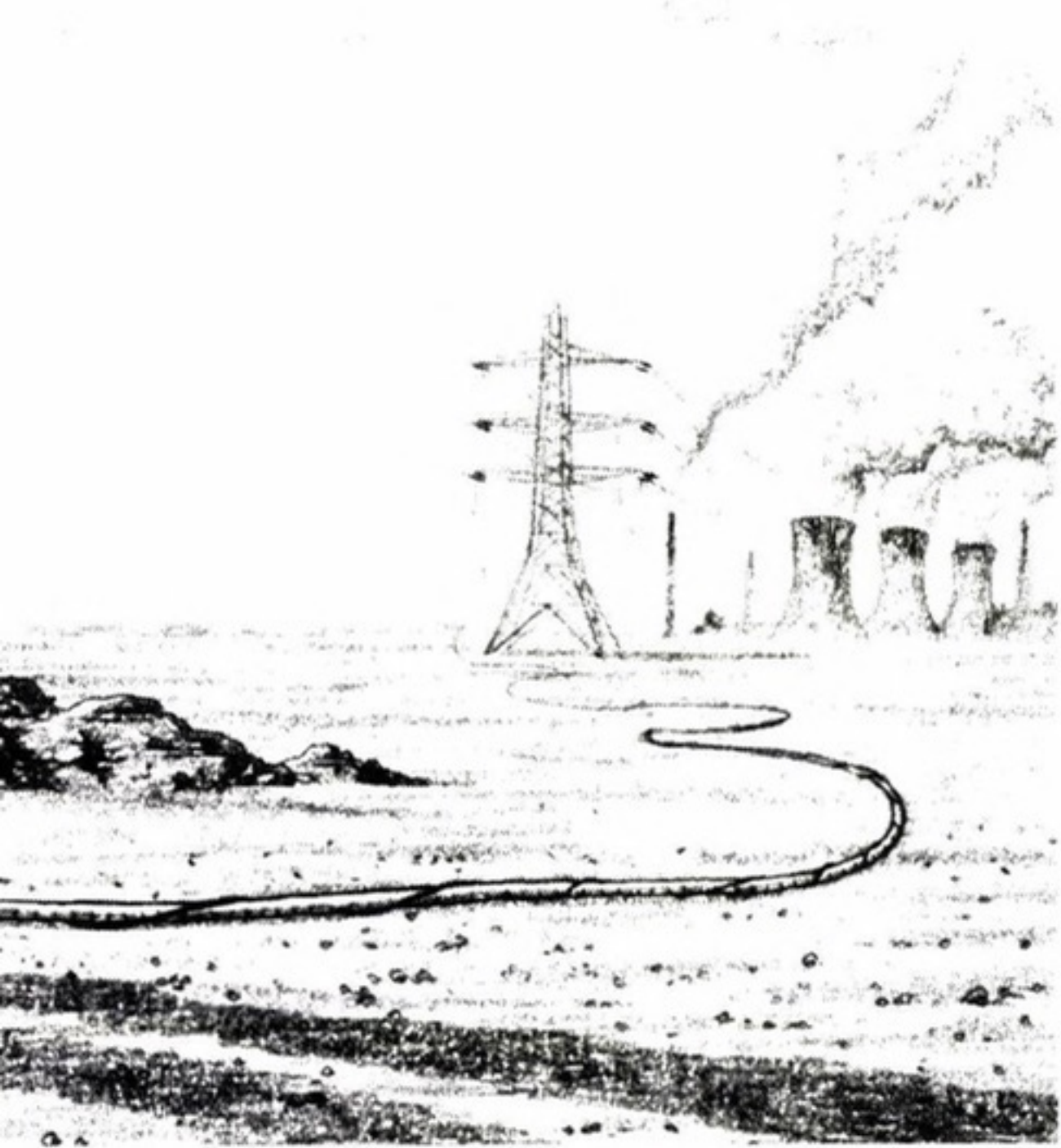
THERE are two entirely different principles which can shape a society's image of itself. Either a person-to-person or a person-to-things relationship predominates. In the first case, events are examined in the light of their significance with regard to neighbours or relatives, ancestors or gods; whereas, in the second, all circumstances in the life of society are judged according to what they contribute to the acquisition and ownership of things. The modern epoch, whose thoughts

and aspirations revolve mainly around property, production and distribution, devotes itself to the cult of things; the use of technology is thus its beatifying ritual.

It was not until after the Second World War, precisely in the age of 'development', that the Third World countries moved into focus within this worldview; they were perceived for the first time from a material-centred viewpoint. Spurred on by the experience of societies investing all their physical and mental

energies in the propagation of things, development strategists perused the world and, lo and behold, discovered an appalling lack of useful objects wherever they looked.

However, what was of primary importance in many villages and communities – the tissue of relationships with neighbours, ancestors and gods – more or less melted into thin air under their gaze. For this reason, the popular image of the Third World was dominated by have-nots desperately



battling for mere survival; and whatever constituted their strength, their honour or their hope remained out of sight.

Although such a definition fails to capture the realities of the lives of many people, it still provided the basis for programmes of global good will. A classic example of this occurred when John F Kennedy called upon Congress in March 1961 to finance the 'Alliance for Progress'. 'Throughout Latin America,' he said, 'millions of people are struggling to free themselves from the bands of poverty, hunger and ignorance'. In the wake of such an exposition, in material-centred terms, of the aspirations of people throughout Latin America from traders on the Gulf of Mexico to cattle farmers of the *pampa* the strategic conclusion was self-evident. 'To the North and the East,' Kennedy continued, 'they see the abundance which modern science can bring. They know the tools of progress are within their reach.'

From Truman's pledge to provide sci-

entific and technical aid, to the hopes of some countries in recent years to leapfrog the outdated industrial nations with the help of biotechnics and information technology, the 'tools of progress' were regarded as the guarantors of successful development. Indeed, if ever there was a single doctrine uniting North and South it was this: more technology is always better than less.

The popularity of this doctrine derives from the tragic fallacy that modern technologies possess the innocence of tools. Are they not basically comparable to a hammer which one can choose to pick up or not but which, when used, immensely increases the power of one's arms? Throughout all classes, nationalities and religions the consensus was for 'more technology' because technology was viewed as powerful but neutral, entirely at the service of the user.

In reality, of course, a model of civilization follows hot on the heels of modern technology. Like the entry of the Trojan horse in the ancient myth, the introduction of technology in the Third World paved the way for a conquest of society from within.

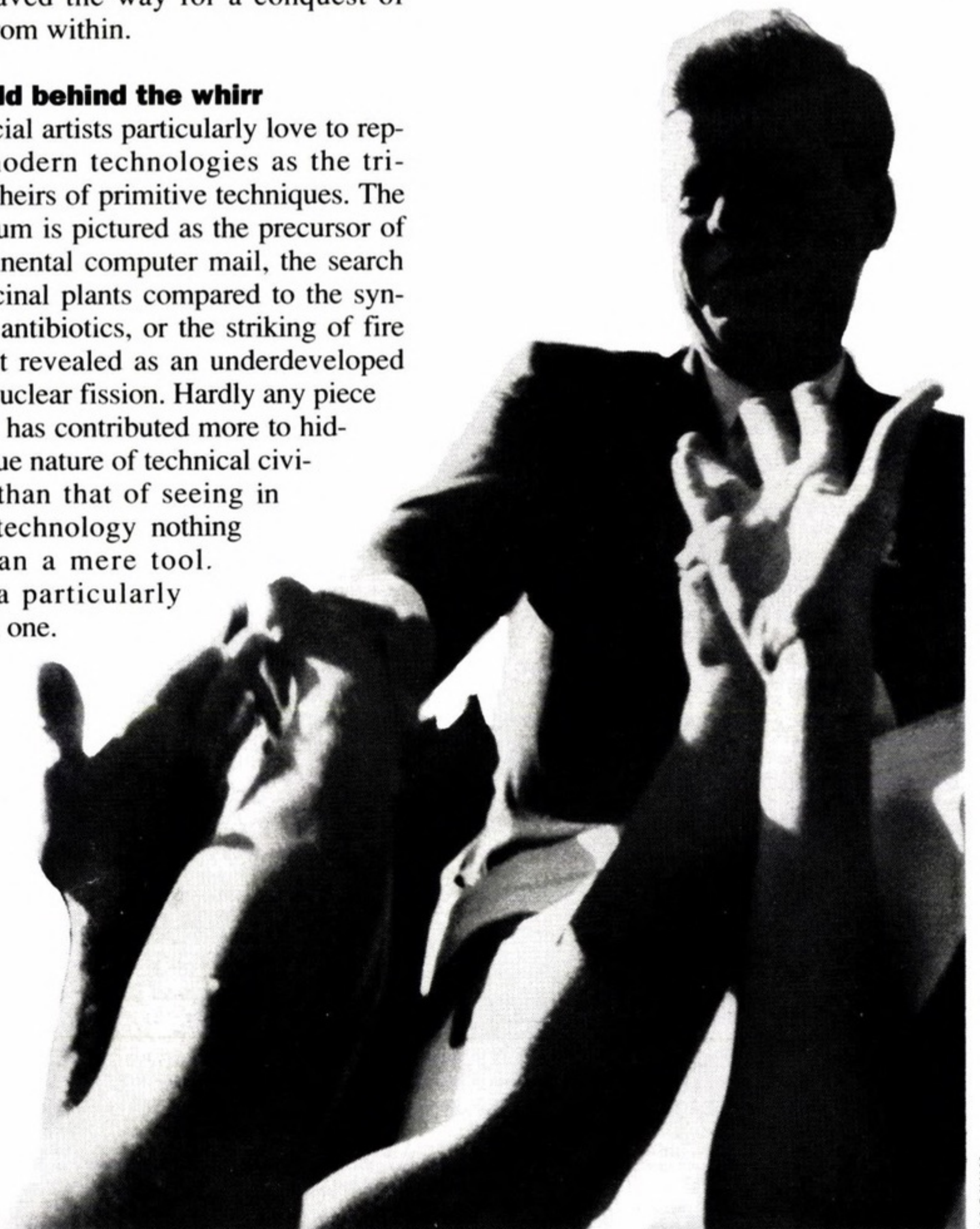
The world behind the whirr

Commercial artists particularly love to represent modern technologies as the triumphant heirs of primitive techniques. The jungle drum is pictured as the precursor of intercontinental computer mail, the search for medicinal plants compared to the synthesis of antibiotics, or the striking of fire from flint revealed as an underdeveloped form of nuclear fission. Hardly any piece of fiction has contributed more to hiding the true nature of technical civilization than that of seeing in modern technology nothing more than a mere tool, even if a particularly advanced one.

Take the example of an electric mixer. Whirring and slightly vibrating, it makes juice from solid fruit in next to no time. A wonderful tool! So it seems. But a quick look at cord and wall-socket reveals that what we have before us is rather the domestic terminal of a national, indeed worldwide, system: the electricity arrives via a network of cables and overhead utility lines which are fed by power stations that depend on water pressures, pipelines or tanker consignments, which in turn require dams, off-shore platforms or derricks in distant deserts. The whole chain only guarantees an adequate and prompt delivery if every one of its parts is overseen by armies of engineers, planners and financial experts, who themselves can fall back on administrations, universities, indeed entire industries (and sometimes even the military).

As with a car, a pill, a computer or a

On top of the world. Kennedy perceived Latin Americans as straining desperately towards the US ideal through the mists of ignorance.



MAGNUM

television, the electric mixer is dependent on the existence of sprawling, interconnected systems of organization and production. Whoever flicks a switch is not using a tool. They are plugging into a combine of running systems. Between the use of simple techniques and that of modern equipment lies the reorganization of a whole society.

However innocent they appear to be, the products of the modern world only function as long as large parts of society

TECHNOLOGIES shape feelings and fashion world views; the traces they leave in the mind are probably more difficult to erase than the traces they leave in the landscape.

behave according to plan. This entails the suppression of both individual will and chance, apart from odd remnants of spontaneity. After all, the aforementioned mixer would not make one revolution were it not assured that, in the whole system chain, everything happens at the right time and place and is of the right quality. Co-ordination and scheduling, training and discipline, not just energy, are the elixir of life for these exceedingly compliant devices. They appear helpful and labour-saving, yet call for the predictable performance of many people in distant places; the tools only function insofar as people themselves turn into tools.

But in developing countries especially,

Magic of the machine. But the trouble the car causes won't be visible through the windshield to this Targui boy from the Sahara.



GEORGE RODGER / MAGNUM

things often don't work that way. In almost any developing country you can find unused equipment, rusting machinery and factories working at half their capacity. For the 'technical development' of a country demands putting into effect that multitude of requirements which have to be fulfilled to set the interconnected systems whirring. And this generally amounts to taking apart traditional society step by step in order to reassemble it according to functional requirements. No society can stay the same; there can be no mixers without remodelling the whole. It is not astonishing, in view of this Herculean task, that the development debate has incessantly repeated the phrase 'comprehensive planning instead of piecemeal solutions' since the early 1960s.

The thrill and the threat

Any technical device is much more than an aid; it is culturally potent. The overwhelming effects of its power dissolve not only physical resistance but also attitudes to life. Technologies shape feelings and fashion worldviews; the traces they leave in the mind are probably more difficult to erase than traces they leave in the landscape.

Who has not experienced the thrill of acceleration at the wheel of a car? A slight movement of the ball of the foot suffices to unleash powers exceeding those of the driver many times over. This incongruity between gentle effort and powerful effect, typical of modern technology, gives rise to the exhilarating feelings of power and freedom which accompany the triumphant forward march of technology. Be it car or plane, telephone or computer, the specific power of modern technology lies in its ability to remove limitations imposed on us by our bodies, by space and by time.

There is more to it, though, than the shaping of feelings. Something new becomes real: it is probably no exaggeration to say that the deep structures of perception are changing with the massive invasion of technology. A few key words probably suffice: nature is viewed in mechanical terms, space is seen as geometrically homogeneous and time as linear. In short, human beings are not the same as they used to be – and they feel increasingly unable to treat technologies like tools by laying them down.

Through transfer of technology, generations of development strategists have worked hard to get Southern countries moving. Economically they have had mixed results, yet culturally – entirely unintended – they have had resounding success. The flood of machines which has

poured into many regions may or may not have been beneficial, but it has certainly washed away traditional aspirations and ideals. Their place has been taken by aspirations and ideals ordered on the coordinates of technological civilization – not only for the limited number who benefit from it, but also for the far larger number who watch its fireworks from the sidelines.

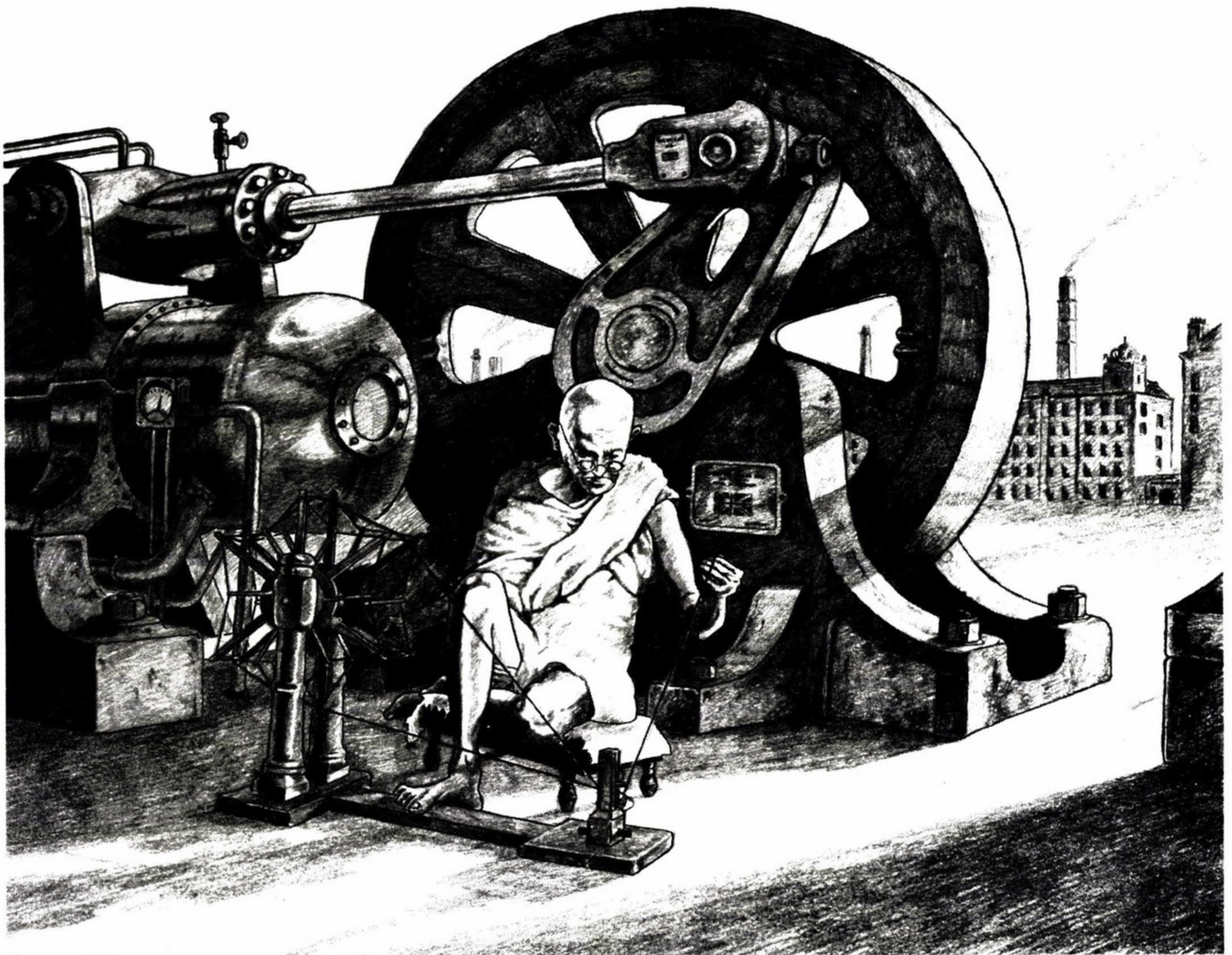
Fragile magic

As everyone knows, magic consists in achieving extraordinary effects through the manipulation of powers that are not of this world. Cause and effect belong to two different spheres; in magic, the sphere of the visible is fused with the sphere of the invisible.

Whoever puts their foot down on the accelerator or pulls a lever also commands a remote, invisible world in order to bring about an event in the immediate, visible everyday world. All of a sudden, incredible power or speed becomes available, whose actual causes lie hidden far beyond the horizon of direct experience. The firework display happens, so to speak, frontstage, whilst the gigantic machinery that makes it all possible ticks away backstage, out of sight.

In this separation of effect and cause, in this invisibility of the systems that pervade society and produce technical miracles, lies the reason for the magic technology which, especially in the Third World, holds so many people spellbound. The speeding power of the car excites the driver precisely because its prerequisites (pipelines, streets, assembly lines) and its consequences (noise, air pollution, greenhouse effect) remain far beyond the view from the windshield. The glamour of the moment is based upon a gigantic transfer of its cost: time, effort and the handling of consequences are shifted onto the systems running in the background of society. So the appeal of technical civilization often depends on an optical illusion.

The 40 years of development have created a paradoxical situation. Today the magic 'tools of progress' dominate the imagination in many countries but the construction of the underpinning systems has got stuck and, indeed, may never be completed in view of the shortage of resources and the environmental crisis. It is this rift between the newly acquired ideal and the reality lagging behind that will shape the future of developing countries. There was no way to shove the Greeks back into the wooden horse after they had appeared right inside Troy. ■



The economist's blind eye

The vital argument between Gandhi and Nehru... The invention of the market... Challenging the economic way of looking at life.

'SHOULD India ever resolve to imitate England, it will be the ruin of the nation.' In 1909, while still in South Africa, Mohandas Gandhi formulated the conviction upon which he then, over a period of 40 years, fought for the independence of India. Although he won the fight, the cause was lost; no sooner was independence achieved than his principle fell into oblivion.

Gandhi wanted to drive the British out

of the country in order to allow India to become more Indian; Nehru, on the other hand, saw independence as the opportunity to make India more Western. An assassin's bullet prevented the controversy between the two heroes of the nation from coming into the open, but the decade-long correspondence between them clearly demonstrates the issues.

Gandhi was not won over to technical civilization with its machines, engines and

factories, because he saw in it a culture which knew no more sublime end than that of minimizing bodily effort and maximizing physical well-being. He could only shrug his shoulders at such an obsession with gaining comfort; as if a good life could be built on that! Didn't India's tradition, undisturbed for thousands of years, have more substantial things to offer?

Although far from being a traditionalist on many issues, Gandhi insisted on a

RENE BURRI / MAGNUM



Nothing matters more to the economist than increasing productivity – as workers at this Hyundai factory in South Korea know to their cost.

society which, in accordance with Hindu tradition, gave priority to a spiritual way of life. An English style of industrialism is out of place wherever *swaraj*, the calm freedom to follow personal truth, is to rule; Gandhi pleaded for a renewal of the countless villages of India and for a form of progress to be judged accordingly. In his eyes, India was committed to an idea of the good and proper life that contradicted the ideals prevalent in England during the age of automation. For this reason, a wholesale imitation of the West was simply out of the question. Individual elements should, in his mind, be adopted only insofar as they could help give better expression to India's aspirations.

Nehru disagreed. He saw no alternative but to introduce the young nation to the achievements of the West as soon as possible and take the road towards an economic civilization. Even in the early days, and in spite of his great admiration for the man, he found Gandhi 'completely unreal' in his vision. Though he intended to avoid the excesses of capitalism, he still viewed Indian society primarily as an economy, that is, as a society defining itself in terms of its performance in providing goods.

From an economic viewpoint, however, the nature of humanity, the function of politics and the character of social reform all assume a particular meaning. People are seen as living in a permanent situation of scarcity, since they always have less than they desire. The most noble task of politics is therefore to create the conditions

for material wealth; and this in turn requires the reorganization of society from a host of locally-based subsistence communities into a nationwide economy.

Nehru thus fostered precisely that Western self-delusion which was also at the core of the development idea: that the essential reality of a society consists in nothing else than its functional achievements; the rest is just folklore or private affairs. From this viewpoint the economy overshadows every other reality; the laws of economy dominate society and not the rules of society the economy. This is why, whenever development strategists set their sights on a country, they do not see a society that *has* an economy, but a society that *is* an economy.

When production is not god

Observing a group of Maya Indians who work their fields in the mountains around Quiche in Guatemala, and seeing the barren ground, the primitive tools and the scanty yield, one might easily come to the conclusion that nothing in the world is more important to them than increasing productivity. Remedies could swiftly be found: better crop rotation, improved seeds, small machines, privatization, and anything else the cookbook of business management might recommend.

All this is not necessarily wrong but the economic viewpoint is notoriously colour blind: it recognises the cost-yield relation with extreme clarity, but is hardly able to perceive other dimensions of

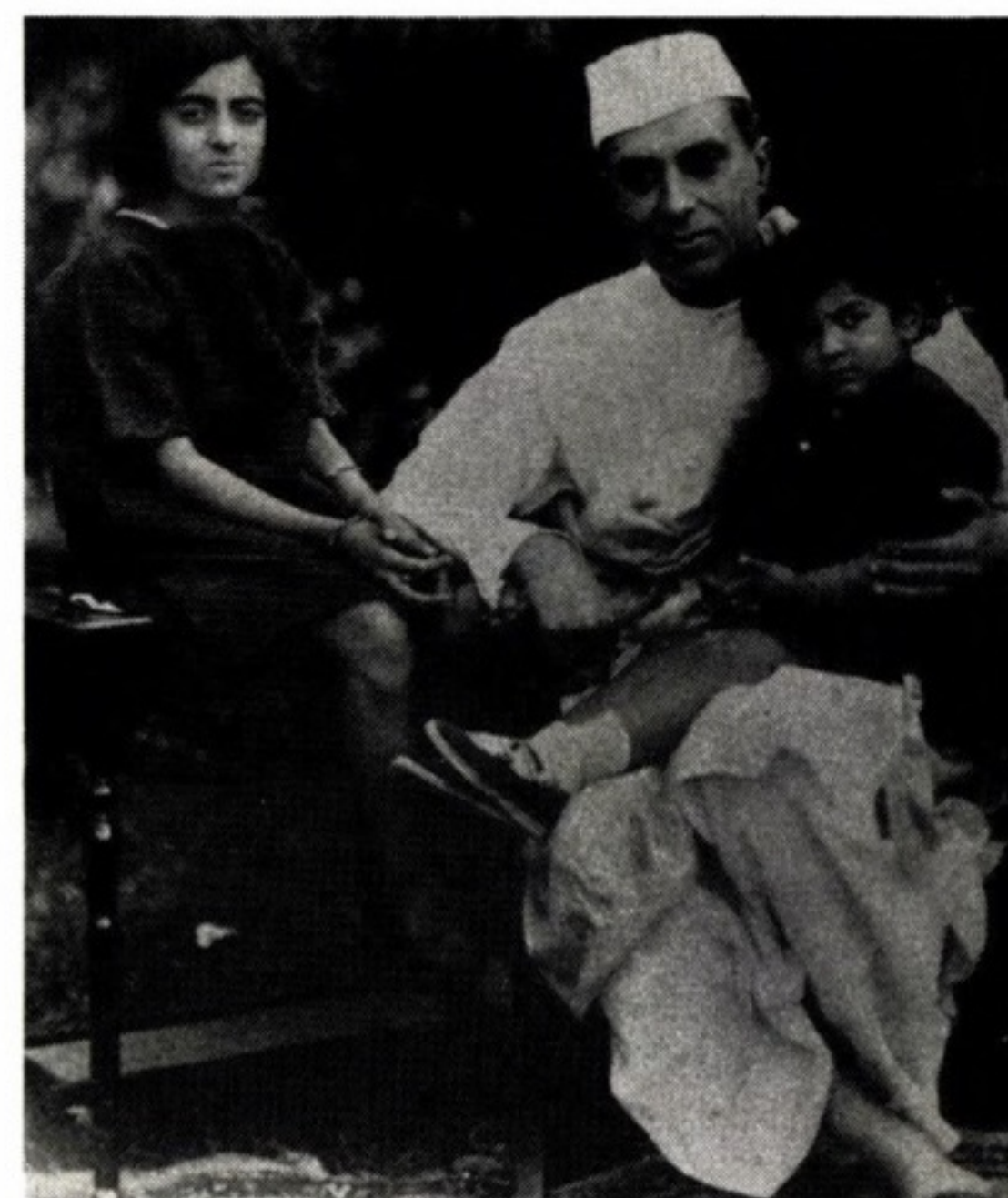
reality. For example, economists have difficulty in recognizing that the land bestows identity upon the Indios since it represents the bridge to their ancestors. Likewise economists often fail to note the central importance of collective forms of labour, in which the village community finds visible expression. The outlook of the Maya is incompatible with that of the economists.

To put this in the form of a paradox: not everything that looks like an economic activity is necessarily a part of economics. Indeed, economics offers only one of many ways of looking at goods-oriented activities and putting them in a larger context. In every society things are produced, distributed and consumed; but only in modern Westernized societies are prices and products, conditions of ownership and work, predominantly shaped by the laws of economic efficiency. Elsewhere different rules are valid, other models prevail.

The Bemba in Zambia, for example, see a good harvest or a successful hunting expedition as a gift from their ancestors – they court the ancestors' favour in the hope of higher production. Then there are the cycles of cultivation practised by farmers in Maharashtra, which neatly fit into the yearly round of weddings, festivals and pilgrimages. New methods of cultivation can soon disrupt this social calendar.

In societies that are not built on the compulsion to amass material wealth, economic activity is also not geared to slick, zippy output. Rather, economic activities like choosing an occupation, cultivating the land, or exchanging goods, are understood as ways of enacting that particular

Nehru in the 1920s when he was a dangerous rebel rather than a Prime Minister. His daughter Indira, later to lead India herself, is on the left.



CAMERA PRESS

social drama in which the members of the community happen to see themselves as the actors. That drama's story largely defines what belongs to whom, who produces what and how it is exchanged. The 'economy' is closely bound up with life but it does not stamp its rules and rhythms on the rest of society. Only in the West does the economy dictate the drama and everyone's role in it.

An invention of the West

As late as 1744, Zedler's Universal Encyclopaedia unwittingly gave a naive definition of the term 'market': '...that spacious public place, surrounded by ornate buildings or enclosed by stands, where, at certain times, all kinds of victuals and other wares are offered for sale; hence the same place is also called market-place'.

The market, heralded both as blessing and as bane over the last two centuries, this powerful idea – nothing more than a location! The author of the encyclopaedia seemed only to be thinking of crowds,

**“ONLY in the West
does the economy
dictate the drama and
everyone's role in it.”**

stands and baskets; there is no mention of 'market shares', 'price fluctuations' or 'equilibrium'. Between his time and ours a far-reaching change has taken place in the self-image of society.

Adam Smith was the first thinker who, when using the term 'market', no longer envisaged a locally determinable outlet for goods, but that society-wide space throughout which all prices intercommunicate. This innovation was no accident, but mirrored a new social reality: an economy of national scope. Before then, a domestic market was not something to be taken for granted; even in Europe at the end of the seventeenth century, one could hardly find trade between different regions of the same country!

Of course from time immemorial there has been trade – one need only think of the North German Hanseatic League or the splendour of Venice – but this was trade with distant countries, which remained limited to a few cities as bridgeheads. History knows markets in all shapes and sizes, but they were local and temporary places of exchange between towns and the surrounding countryside.

In Adam Smith's century, however,

the nation-state drew a web of trade relations over the whole of society and established the domestic market. Like today's developing countries, the young states of that time pushed hard to make economic principles prevail everywhere, be it only to finance their own existence. That was the birth of the national economy, even on a lexical level: while the term 'economy' had formerly been applied to the 'domestic economy' of the prince, now the whole nation was transformed into a 'political economy'. And Smith became the theoretician of a society governed by the rules of the market.

Alternatives to the economy?

The transformation of society into a political economy was, of course, only achieved after a prolonged struggle demanding many sacrifices. After all, people were not shaped by a commercial ethos – it did not influ-

ence how they regarded work or property, their idea of good conduct or their sense of time. The merchant was not yet an entrepreneur, land was not saleable, competition was frowned upon, usury disreputable, and those who worked for wages lived on the fringes of society. As a result, the progress of capitalism was punctuated by bitter disputes about whether and to what extent land and forest, grain and money, and workers themselves, could be treated as commodities.

In the last decades, similar radical changes have taken place in large parts of the Third World as economic ideology has tightened its grip. Traditions of sufficiency have been pushed aside, local exchange relations dissolved, collective forms of ownership broken up, and subsistence economies wiped out. For a long time the guiding light of international development policy was to create societies of paid workers and consumers everywhere. Experts scrutinized countries to identify 'obstacles to development' which were hampering the free mobility of 'production factors'. No cost was too high and few sacrifices were too great in the quest to turn societies into smoothly-



Age-old ingenuity. People a few miles from this valley in Batad, the Philippines, were threatened by a huge dam development.

running political economies.

Without any doubt, miracles were thus wrought, and a great tide swept through the countries of the Southern hemisphere; history had taken an enormous leap. However, it is becoming ever clearer that a disaster is in the offing. At the very moment the economy has finally achieved worldwide dominion, social disruptions and environmental destruction have become rampant.

The domination of the economy is showing its menacing side. Societies find themselves cornered: they cannot afford to surrender to this monster, but they cannot escape from it either. In fact the economy, during its rise to the top, has stamped out alternatives to itself which are not so hazardous for both humans and nature.

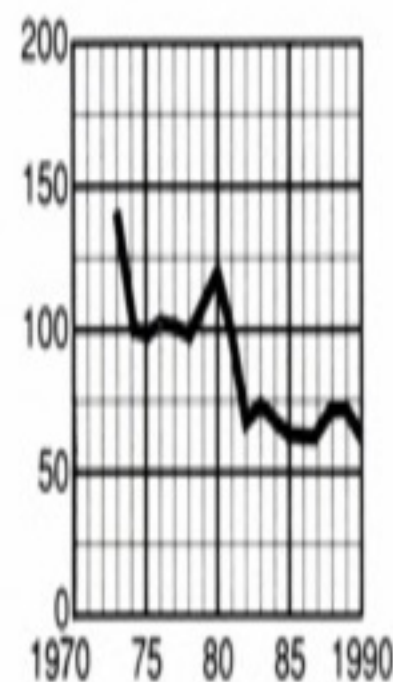
How is it possible to reinvent economic institutions that allow people to live gracefully without making them prisoners of the pernicious drive to accumulate? Maybe there will be more creative power in the Third World to meet this historical challenge. Simply because, in spite of everything, many people there still remember a way of life in which economic performance was not paramount. ■

Number crunching the world

This centre-page Facts spread is one of the NI's most popular features largely because it provides a statistical foundation for our (inevitably subjective) arguments. But you should not take a statistic's 'truth' for granted just because it has an eminently respectable United Nations source. Handle all 'facts' with care.

ANYONE who has listened to government spokespeople churning out 'facts' that show how wonderfully they have handled the economy or the health system, and compared these with their personal experience, will realize that statistics can always be distorted, pressed into service to back up a particular view.

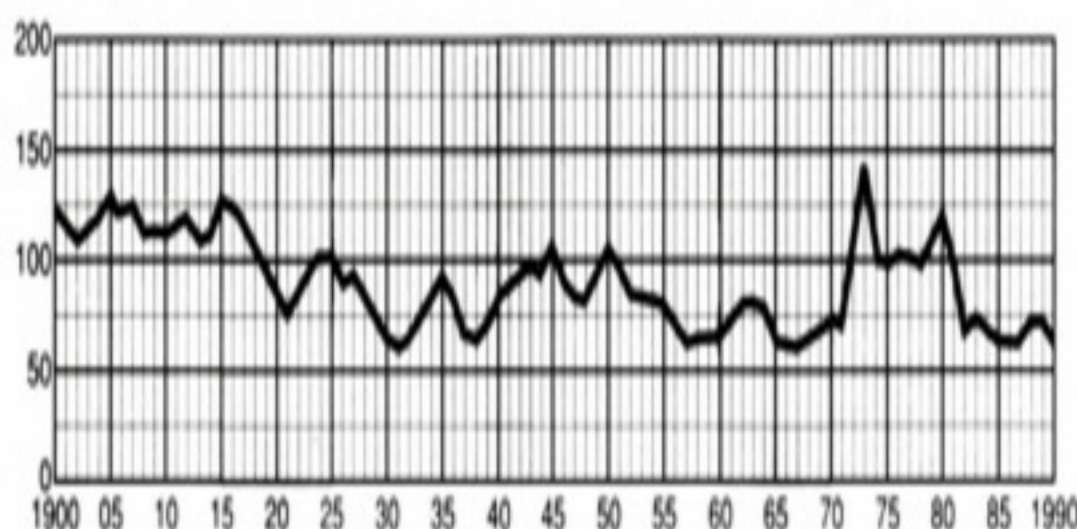
The NI, it's only fair to warn you, does much the same thing. Let's take an example. We quite often look at the unfair terms of trade which afflict Third World countries and point to the steep decline in the prices they can get for their exports of primary commodities on the world market. We might well illustrate the point with the following graph which shows what effect the steep decline in commodity prices over the past decade has had on the terms of trade.



The source of this graph is the World Bank (*World Development Report 1991*) and because this is a body not noted for its advocacy of the poor it makes the information automatically more trustworthy. Since the NI began back in 1973 the terms of trade have been getting worse and worse – the classic way of making this fact clear is to say that Third World countries have had to export twice as much cotton, coffee, copper and so on to buy the same tractor as they would have done in 1973.

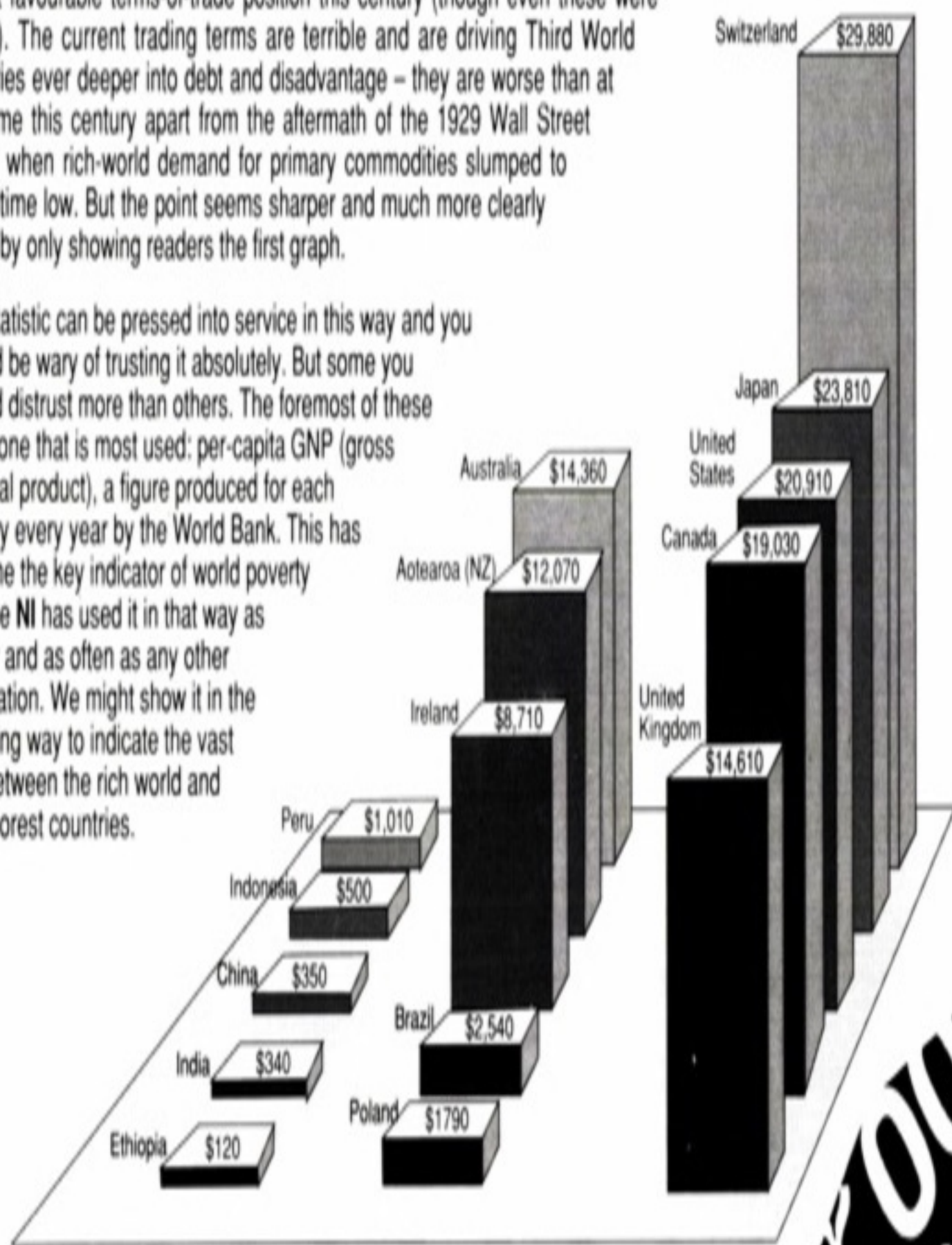
All of this is true. But we have been slightly economical with the truth. Take a look at the full table showing the terms of trade over the whole century from 1900 to 1990.

Nonfuel primary commodities versus manufactures (Index 1977-79 = 100).



It's clear from this that 1973, the starting-point for the first table, was actually the most favourable terms-of-trade position this century (though even these were unfair). The current trading terms are terrible and are driving Third World countries ever deeper into debt and disadvantage – they are worse than at any time this century apart from the aftermath of the 1929 Wall Street Crash when rich-world demand for primary commodities slumped to an all-time low. But the point seems sharper and much more clearly made by only showing readers the first graph.

Any statistic can be pressed into service in this way and you should be wary of trusting it absolutely. But some you should distrust more than others. The foremost of these is the one that is most used: per-capita GNP (gross national product), a figure produced for each country every year by the World Bank. This has become the key indicator of world poverty and the NI has used it in that way as widely and as often as any other publication. We might show it in the following way to indicate the vast gap between the rich world and the poorest countries.



GNP (Gross National Product) . . .

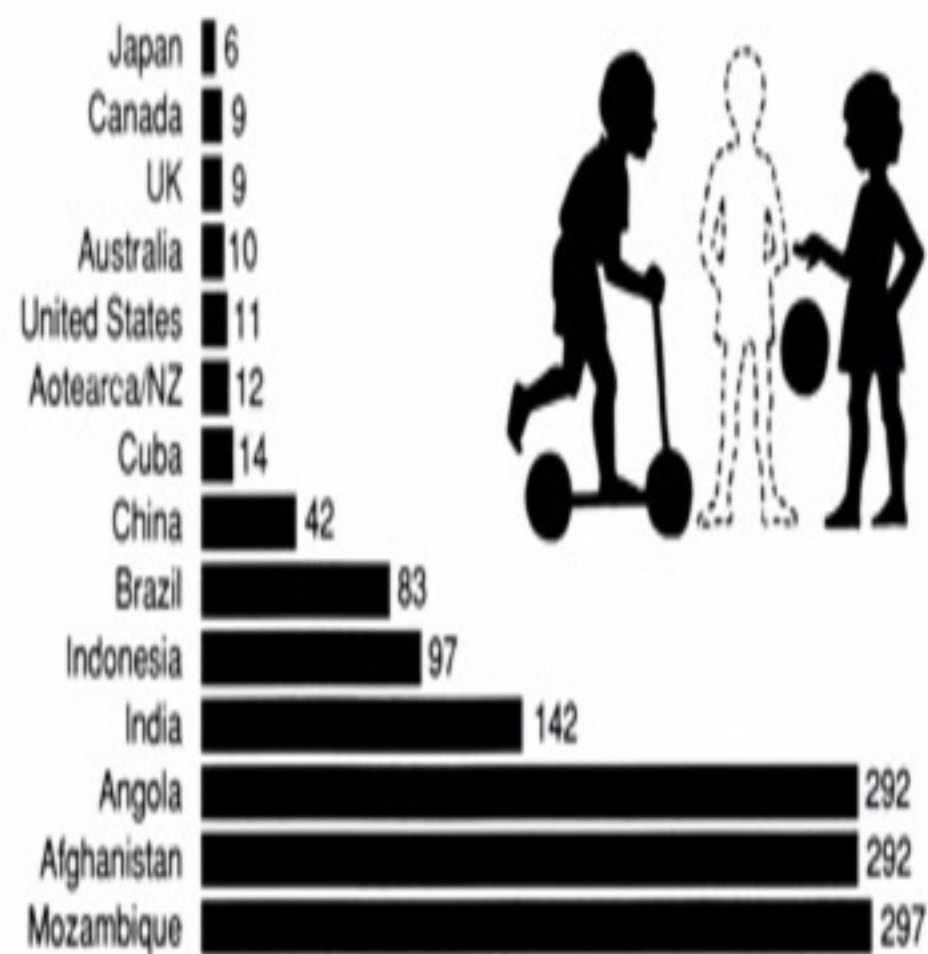
- was designed to reflect Keynesian ideas which do not even apply to industrial countries in the same way any more, let alone to Third World nations.
- uses economic indicators that are notoriously arbitrary and elastic. The economist Dudley Seers once wagered \$10,000 that he could use the same set of national accounts to come up with many different economic growth rates, all of which would pass muster with the experts.
- exaggerates the gap between rich and poor nations. For example, you could live on US\$10 in India for a week; in the US you would be lucky to survive a day. More generally, any country with a cold climate has its GNP inflated by heating costs which do not apply in hot countries.
- takes no account of the social or environmental costs of economic activity. It can even register such costs as positive. For example, an enterprise which caused pollution that other businesses then cleaned up would contribute more to GNP than a non-polluting enterprise.
- misses out huge areas of human activity which cannot be valued in monetary terms. People who live on a subsistence level can have a richer culture and quality of life than others much better off financially.
- misses out the huge number of cash transactions in the informal economy – and in the Third World most of the urban poor rarely venture outside this 'shadow economy'.



But more worrying than GNP itself is the use it has been put to over the last few decades. All too often it is presented as the main indicator of human well-being, the only statistic that matters. Like the development process in general, it depicts the whole world as travelling on the same economic and social road as the rich nations of the West.

A better indicator of the quality of life in a society is its child-mortality rate: disease, hardship, women's oppression and hunger are all likely to be reflected in this statistic. UNICEF's ordering of the world's nations in terms of their under-five mortality rates makes a lot more sense than ordering them by GNP.

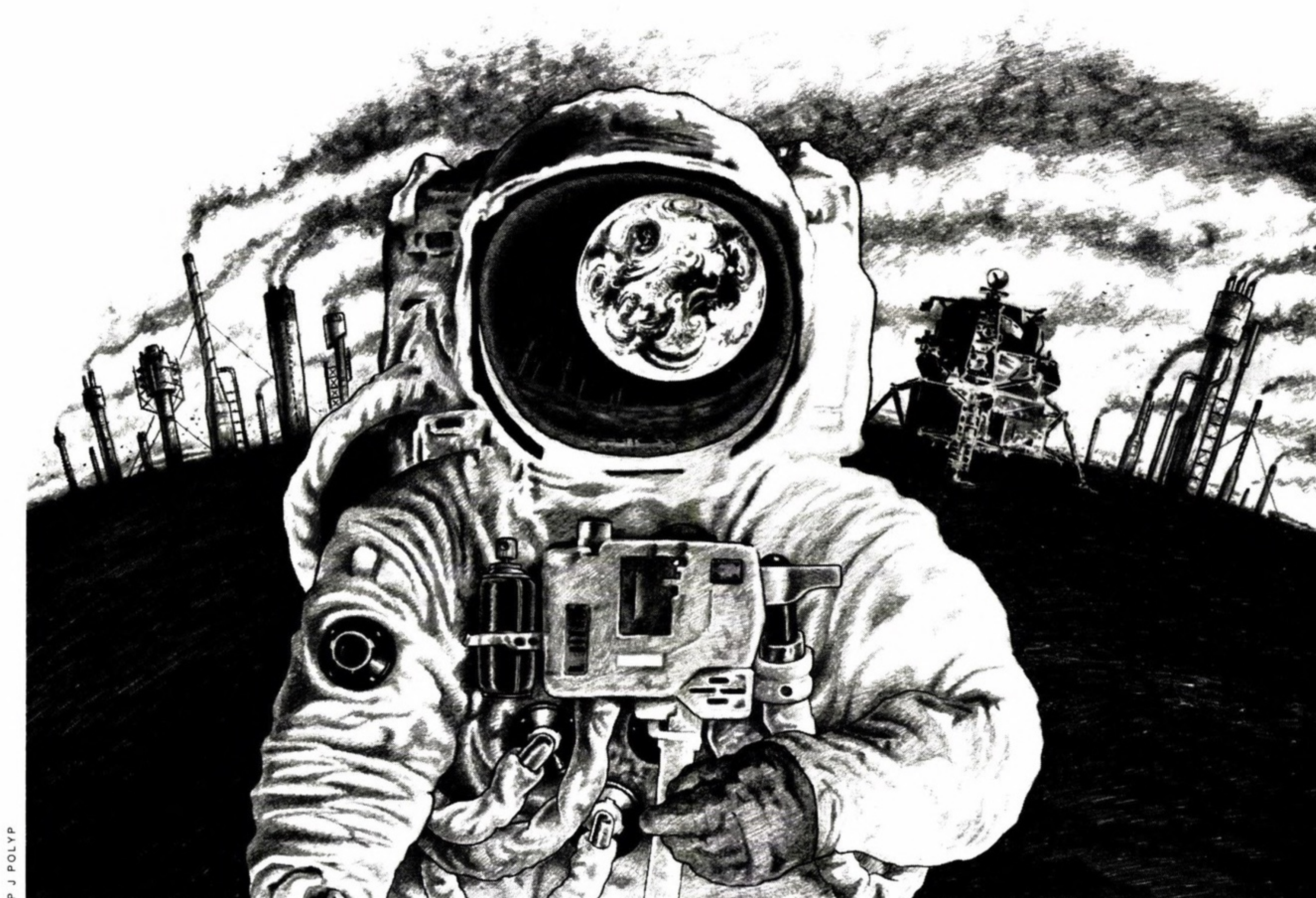
Under-five mortality rate per 1,000 live births in 1990 (Selected countries ranging from the best through to the worst in the world)



BUT you should have some suspicion of even these statistics, since they are often hopelessly out of date. Figures from the UN Population Division Database show that in 50.5 per cent of developing countries the most recent source of information on child mortality is pre-1984. Since then the figures have just been projected upward or downward from that most recent source. They thus give next to no idea of what has happened since AIDS arrived or since IMF structural-adjustment policies started to hit the poorest people in the mid-1980s. This is particularly worrying in Africa, where 68 per cent of the data is from before 1984.

THE search is on for a statistical indicator which will give a fuller sense of people's lives than GNP could ever offer. Since 1990, for example, the UN Development Programme has been publishing its *Human Development Report* which tries to rank countries according to an index made up of three equal parts: life expectancy, education and gross domestic product (adjusted so that income over the poverty line has less value). It puts different countries at the bottom but the same few rich countries at the top.

It seems unlikely that any one statistical category is incapable of capturing the richness and diversity of human experience, of measuring our general well-being. But what is certain is that the most widely used statistical measurement of all, per-capita GNP, is utterly inadequate. Whenever you see those three capital letters, in this magazine as well as in any others, BEWARE!



P. J. POLYP

Whose environment?

*The rise and rise of the environment idea... How anti-growth became 'sustainable growth'...
Why subsistence cultures have good reason to fear the conservation movement.*

NEIL ARMSTRONG's journey to the moon cast new light not on the neighbouring celestial body, but on our own earth. Looking back at the distant earth from the Apollo spaceship, he shot those pictures which today decorate the cover of nearly every report on the future of the planet: far away, a small, fragile ball standing out brightly against the darkness of outer space, its water and continents veiled by a fine layer of cloud. This is nothing less than a visual revolution: only since Armstrong have we been able to see the globe. This has made it possible for

the first time to speak of *our* planet.

Yet the possessive pronoun betrays at the same time a deep ambivalence. 'Our' can express an attachment, a common destiny, an all-encompassing reality, but it can also indicate ownership and refer to freely usable property. Consequently the photograph may arouse a feeling of responsibility – but also renew a taste for control.

The idea of the 'environment' has been subject to exactly the same ambivalence. Whereas this was first understood as something opposed to economic growth, it is now taking on a new mean-

ing, heralding a new round of 'development'. Indeed, now that the crises of 'ignorance', 'poverty' and 'hunger' have run their course, it seems that the crisis of planetary survival will trigger off a new flood of 'development' in the 1990s. It is hardly a coincidence that the report of the World Commission on the Environment and Development (the Brundtland Report) opens with a reference to the photograph of the planet from space and subsequently concludes: 'This new reality, from which there is no escape, must be recognized – and managed'.

On the international stage, 'environment' moved into the limelight for the first time in 1972 at the UN Environment Conference in Stockholm. The Swedes, worried by acid rain and poisonous residues in birds and fish, had proposed the conference and were met with a swift response, especially in the US and Canada, where environmental conflicts were already daily subjects of conversation.

The world as a system

A new category of problems – 'global issues' – emerged which demanded a forum and the UN seized the opportunity. Stockholm was only the beginning of a series of major conferences (on population, food, science and technology, desertification and so on), which helped alter our perception of global space. The world had previously been seen as open country in which a multitude of nations pursued economic growth, each for itself and against all the others. This was slowly replaced by the image of an interconnected global system in which all nations had to operate under an array of restrictive conditions. Global space was experienced less and less in terms of opportunity and ever more clearly in terms of limitation.

The world was now conceived as a system made up of population, technology, food, resources and environment. Its stability was jeopardized as soon as these components were no longer in equilibrium. Indeed, disaster was predicted, since the demands of population and technology were threatening vastly to exceed the capacity of the world's resources. Unlimited growth was thus called a dangerous illusion because the world was in fact a closed space with only a limited carrying capacity.

The Club of Rome popularized this perception of the future. But the global ecosystem approach was successful only because it was wholly compatible with the interests of the development elite: it shared their perspective – the lofty heights of worldwide planning – and sorted the confusion in the world neatly and tidily into clear sets of data that

practically clamoured for action.

Although such a critique of growth was initially a blow for conventional wisdom, it cleared the ground for the definition of a new development problem: the long-term conservation of natural resources. Governments had little interest in the 'limits to growth' but, on the other hand, could hardly ignore the fact that growth depended on much more than previously cherished conditions like 'capital formation' or 'manpower training'.

The message was that whoever wanted long-term growth had better refrain from squandering all resources today, and this insight led to talk of 'the efficient management of natural resources'. By translating an indictment of growth into a problem of conserving resources, the conflict between growth and environment had been defused and turned into a managerial exercise; development planners now had to think of nature too. The Brundtland Report derives its strength from precisely this perspective: 'In the past we have been concerned about the impacts of economic growth upon the environment; we are now forced to concern ourselves with the impact of ecological stress upon our economic prospects.'

However, a further obstacle stood in the way of the happy union of 'environment' and 'development'. If you protected the environment weren't you failing in your mission to 'eliminate poverty'? Would not the poor be left empty-handed if growth came under attack? Lo and behold, the poor were discovered to be

agents of the destruction of resources – so that growth for the sake of 'eliminating poverty' could be presented as a strategy of environmental protection. If there are no more poor people looking for firewood or overtaxing the soil, so the argument runs, then the environment will also be helped. This is why the Brundtland Report calls for the 'satisfaction of basic needs' as a method of resource conservation.

After these readjustments had been made, both conventional and socially-aware adherents of growth were able to live with a call for a conserver society; environmentalism was no longer in contradiction with the traditional debates on growth and basic needs. In effect the Brundtland Report incorporated ecological concern into the idea of development by erecting 'sustainable development' as a conceptual roof under which the environment could be both violated and healed. As so many times in the last 40 years, when the destructive effects of development were recognized 'development' was stretched in such a way as to include both injury and therapy.

The trend towards ecocracy

Catchwords are crystallizations of desires. 'Ecology' has become the motto of our age because it holds the promise of reuniting what has been sundered and of healing what has been wounded – in short, of nurturing the whole. Indeed, the inability of modern institutions to see beyond the horizon of their specific interests and to

Desolate heat. The Sahara haunts us as an image of what our abuse of the earth could lead to.



GEORGE RODGER / MAGNUM

answer for the (so-called) side-effects of their actions is now on record. Their high level of efficiency is based on indifference to all consequences that do not enter their own immediate calculations. Even the Third World has not been spared this: intensive agriculture causes the water table to sink; energy policies tolerate the clearing of rainforests; chemical factories sow disease, sometimes even death.

The language of control

All the environment reports on development policy respond to this with calls for farsightedness and integrated planning. One of their key concepts is that of the 'system'. But beware! Systems language is not innocent; it tailors your perception. If you look at a habitat, be it a pond in the forest or planet earth, as a 'system', you are implying that you can identify the fundamental components that make it up. In the case of the pond, the system may constitute an interplay between energy, mass and temperature; with the world system, it may involve population, resources and environment.

Essentially it means reducing a confused reality to a handful of abstract notions. Systems language purges reality of local particularities, of quality and uniqueness; it is insensitive to the individuality of a situation.

Moreover, systems language cannot resist looking at living communities from the standpoint of control. It is, in its origin, the language of engineers and managers. The systems concept was invented between the world wars in order to describe organisms in a sober, mechanistic manner, 'whole' being interpreted as 'equilibrium' and, in the tradition of engineering, the relationship between the

whole and its parts as a 'self-regulating mechanism' with the function of maintaining this equilibrium. The terms 'ecosystem' or 'global system' cannot shake off the legacy of engineering; the language is committed to an interest in regulation and control.

Even the apparently harmless word 'environment' obeys this interest splendidly. In contrast to 'nature' for instance, it does not reveal any life: it is abstract and colourless and the embodiment of passivity. On closer examination this is

ECOLOGY has become the motto of our age because it holds the promise of reuniting what has been surrendered and of healing what has been wounded.

not surprising, for 'environment' as a concept has no existence in itself, but rather is something surrounding a subject which is usually not specified. What does the environment surround? What is important about it and for whom?

In the international environmental reports, the hidden subject is usually nothing other than the national economy. Environment appears here as the sum total of physical barriers hampering the dynamics of the economic system. And the solution to the environmental problem here is usually for the economic system to leap to even higher levels of complexity – rather than for its own dynamics to be questioned.

Rural communities in the Third World

do not need to wait for experts from hastily founded eco-development institutes to descend on them and deliver remedies for, let's say, soil erosion. Provision for the welfare of their children and grandchildren has always been a part of their cultivation methods and economies. In the future, however, centralized environmental planning threatens to come into conflict with local ecologies.

For example, in the Indian Himalayas the Chipko Movement made the combative courage and wisdom of the women, who protected the trees from chain-saws with their bodies, into a symbol of local resistance reaching far beyond the borders of India. Yet their success had its price: forest managers moved in and claimed responsibility for the trees. They brought along surveys, showed around diagrams, pointed out growth curves, and argued with optimal felling rates. Those who had defended the trees to protect their means of subsistence and to give testimony to the interconnectedness of life saw themselves unexpectedly bombarded with research findings and the abstract categories of resource economics. The suppression of local knowledge by experts and bureaucracies may increase even further through environmental planning.

The threat of conservation

Furthermore, subsistence economies may be led into disaster by the movement towards conservation. Subsistence cultures are, after all, intimately bound up with nature: they live directly from it and can thus keep the money economy at arm's length. Wherever forests are converted into tree plantations or national parks, communities which use them as their living space are threatened not only with banishment but also with economic downgrading.

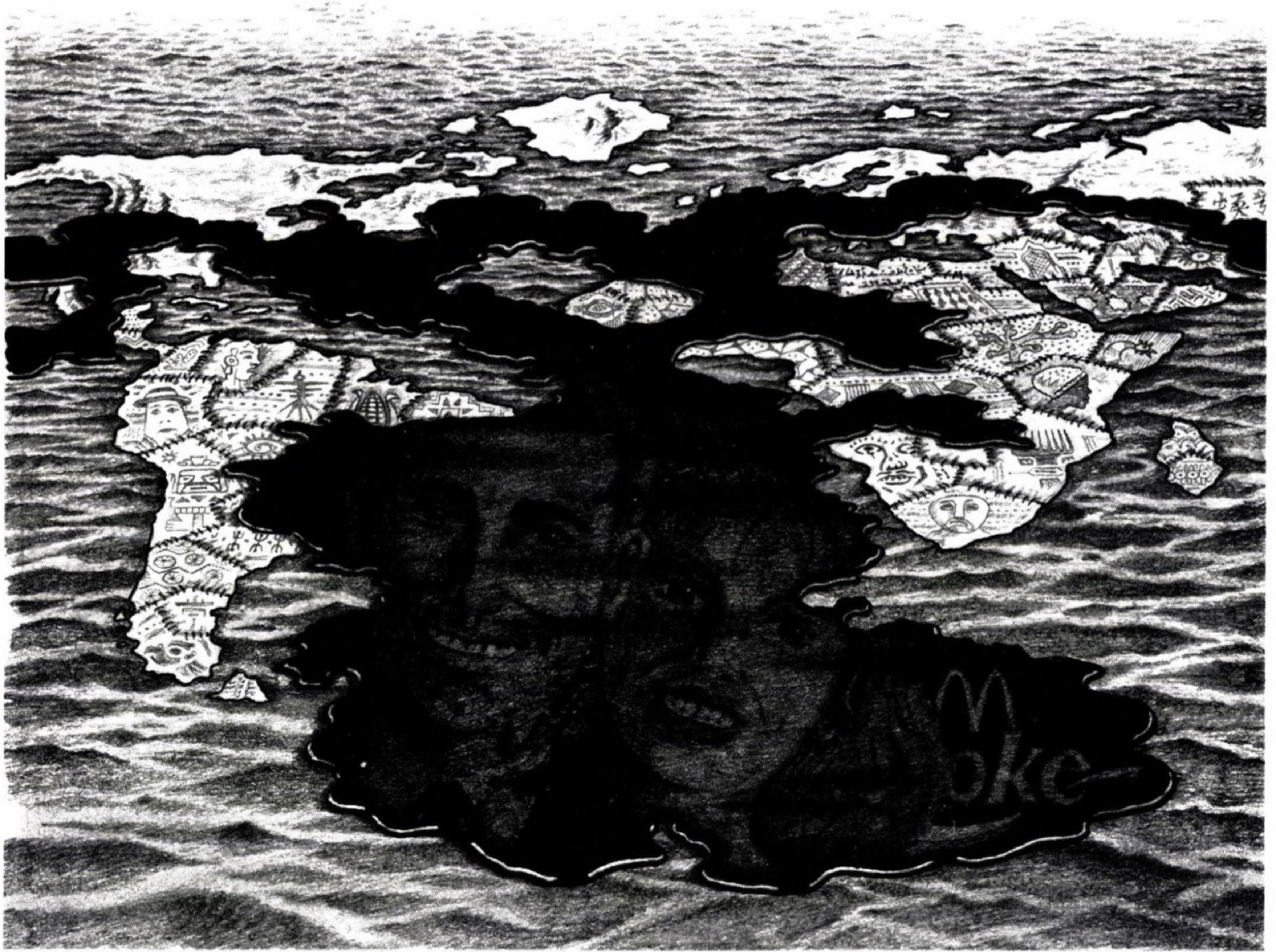
The reforestation programmes in the wake of the Chipko movement, for example, favoured fast-growing species of wood whose effect on the soil and water balance were such that they could no longer provide a home for the indigenous people. An ecology that aimed at the management of scarce natural resources clashed with an ecology that wished to preserve the local commons. In this way national resource planning can be a continuation of the war against subsistence.

Satellite pictures of the earth scanning crops, pastures and forests evoke a spurious universalism. In these pictures, human beings and what nature means to them and their lives are missing. Global resource management tends to disregard the local context. Such disregard used to go under the name of colonialism. ■

'Are you sure you know what is best for me?' Conservation may spell disaster for subsistence cultures like that of this girl near Lake Titicaca in Peru.



CHRIS STEELE-PERKINS / MAGNUM



P. J. POLYP

One world against many worlds

The evaporation of the world's languages... The underdeveloped take the place of the savages... Lifeboat ethics and the threat to diversity

ROUGHLY 5,100 languages are spoken on the earth at the moment. Just under 99 per cent of them are native to Asia and Africa, the Pacific and the Americas, with just one per cent in Europe. In Nigeria more than 400 languages have been counted, in India 1,682, and even Central America, which is geographically quite small, boasts 260 languages. Mountain valleys; islands, deserts and forest: these are often the places where tiny linguistic worlds assert

their existence. A patchwork quilt of linguistic areas, large and small, covers the planet. But all indicators suggest that within a generation not many more than 100 of these languages will survive.

Languages are dying out every bit as quickly as species; just as plants and animals are disappearing from the history of nature never to be seen again, with the demise of languages whole cultures are vanishing from the history of civilization. Entire conceptions of what it means to be

human are evaporating in the heat of 'development'.

And yet, the death of languages is only the most dramatic signal of the worldwide evaporation of cultures. Although the individual effects of this often enough remain on the surface, the aggregate effect of transistor radios and *Dallas*, agricultural advisers and nurses, the regime of the clock and the iron laws of the market, triggers a historically unprecedented transformation. Whichever way you look

at it, a global monoculture is spreading like an oil slick over the planet.

We have now had 40 years of 'development', fashioned on the model of 'one world'. The upshot of it all, if appearances do not deceive, is a looming vision of horror. Ideas such as 'world domestic policy', 'unified world market', or even 'global responsibility' have stimulated noble minds and are bandied about with a tone of moral pathos, today even more than a few years ago. But their innocence in an age of cultural evaporation is tarnished.

The shadow side of 'humanity'

At least there is a brass plate, in San Francisco's Fairmount Hotel, to remind the passing conference visitor that it was here, on 4 May 1945, that a global hope was initialled. In room 210, delegates from 46 countries agreed on the text of the United Nations Charter.

Hitler's Germany was finally defeated and time would soon run out for Japan too; the Charter promulgated those principles which were designed to usher in an era of peace. Down with acts of national egoism! Long live international understanding! The unity of 'mankind' was invoked on all sides, universalism was the idea of the moment. Roosevelt's four freedoms were to apply 'in all parts of the world', and 'all people in all countries' were to be granted 'the conditions for economic and social progress'. Only within the horizons of a global society of human beings with equal rights, according to the vision, would violence and war be banished from the face of the earth.

The United Nations appealed to ideals



Patterns of diversity—a Konibo from Peru. Languages and cultures are dying every bit as quickly as species.

which had taken shape during the European Enlightenment, when 'humanity' took over from Christianity as the dominant collective concept. From then on 'humanity' became the common denominator uniting all peoples, causing differences in skin colour, religion and social forms to fade into insignificance.

Not that this had obliterated the image of The Other! Just as Christians had their heathens, philosophers of the Enlightenment had their savages. But whereas 'heathens' populated geographically remote areas, the Enlightenment's savages inhabited an earlier stage of history. The unity of humankind could be envisaged by placing differences in a temporal context: 'savages' were human beings who were *not yet* fully mature and responsible.

The Enlightenment's idea of one humankind suggested that, as history ran its course, differences would dissolve into one 'civilization'. 'Development', especially as exemplified by the UN Charter, closely follows this tradition to conceive of 'one world'. The 'underdeveloped' have taken the place of the 'savages', but the arrangement of concepts remains the same: a global society endowed with peace does not yet exist, but must first be achieved through the 'development' of backward peoples. Whatever is different is seen as a threat which must be neutralized through 'development'. Consequently, the unity of the world is going to be realized through its westernization.

Today it seems almost strange, but the founders of the United Nations as well as the architects of development policy were inspired by the vision that the globalization of the market would guarantee peace in the world. Instead of violence the spirit of commerce was to reign on all sides; productive power rather than firepower would be decisive in the competition between nations. Global order was conceived, after the Second World War, in terms of a unified world market.

With a naivety hardly distinguishable from deception, the prophets of development polished up a utopia envisioned in the eighteenth century, as if time had stopped and neither capitalism nor imperialism had ever appeared on the scene. After Montesquieu, the Enlightenment had discovered commerce as a means of refining crude manners. In their eyes rational calculation and cold self-interest, precisely those attitudes which make the

One-track mind. The development idea knows only one direction — West. This causeway carries cars from Saudi Arabia to Bahrain.





TOM FAWTHROP / CAMERA PRESS

Gentle persuasion. Westernized development sometimes needs 'securing', as under Marcos in the Philippines.

passion for war or the whims of tyrants appear self-destructive, would spread with trade. And trade creates dependence and dependence tames.

This is the logic which runs from Montesquieu through the UN down to the 'New World Order'. It can hardly be denied that, at least after World War Two, this logic was to some extent validated: as European integration and the Pax Americana illustrate, the conquest of foreign territories by bellicose states has yielded to the conquest of foreign markets by profit-seeking industries. Nevertheless, in the age of multinational banks and corporations, it has become evident that a fixation on this 'yesterday's utopia' leads into all kinds of pitfalls.

The world market, once brandished as a weapon against political tyranny, has itself become a closet dictator under whose dominion both rich and poor countries tremble. The fear of falling behind in international competition has become the predominant organizing motive of politics in North and South, East and West. It drives developing countries further into self-exploitation, for the sake of boosting exports, and industrial countries further into the wasteful and destructive mania of production. Both enterprises and entire states see themselves trapped in a situation of remorseless competition, where each participant is dependent on the decisions of all the other players.

United in Spaceship Earth

What falls by the wayside amidst this hurly-burly is the possibility for a policy of self-determination. All attempts to organize society creatively are repeatedly thwarted by the need to compete in the world market. Some countries cannot do without agricultural exports, others cannot drop out of the hi-tech race.

There is scarcely a country today which seems able to control its own destiny; in this respect the differences between countries are only relative. The United States certainly enjoys more scope than India, but itself feels under intense pressure from Japan. For winners and losers alike, the constraints of the global market have become a nightmare.

Since the late 1960s, a further image of 'one world' has edged its way into our consciousness: the globe in its physical finiteness. From creeping desertification to

“THE world market, once brandished as a weapon against political tyranny, has itself become a closet dictator under whose dominion both rich and poor countries tremble.”

impending climatic disaster, signals multiply and ring out in shrill concert that life processes on earth are going askew. Local acts such as clearing forests or driving cars add up to a global disaster. The unity of humankind is no longer an Enlightenment flight of fancy but thrusts itself upon the peoples of the world as a bio-physical fact.

What used to be conceived of as an historical endeavour – to establish the unity of humankind – now reveals itself as an ill-boding fate; instead of hopeful appeals, sombre warnings provide the accompaniment. The formula 'one world or no world' captures this experience; the destructive power of human beings has become so great that they must curb themselves and take on their global responsibility on pain of self-destruction. Seen in this light, humanity resembles a group of individuals

thrown together by chance in a lifeboat, where no one person can rock the boat without causing all to be united immediately – in their collective destruction.

Amidst the wailing sirens of this kind of lifeboat ethics, things do not look too rosy for the patchwork quilt of cultures that is our world. For the appreciation of variety will swiftly vanish as soon as worldwide strategies are implemented, even in remote villages, in order to prevent the boat from capsizing. Can one imagine a more powerful motive for forcing the world into line than that of saving the planet?

It is perfectly conceivable that the urge for efficient consumer behaviour and extensive resource planning – where possible assisted by satellite observation and computer models – will push diversity further into the shadows. An ecocracy which acts in the name of 'one earth' and aims to get the world out of its criminal rut and make it fighting fit can soon become a threat to local communities and their lifestyle.

But this insight does not help us out of the dilemma which will have a determining influence on the coming decades: it is self-destructive both to think in categories of One World and not to think in categories of One World. On the one hand, it is sacrilege in our age of cultural evaporation to apprehend the globe as a united, highly integrated world. On the other, if we see the globe as a multitude of different and only loosely connected worlds, we still cannot dispense with the idea of unity in the face of lurking violence and the destruction of nature.

It was certainly an epochal mistake in the period of development to endeavour to keep the world together by means of westernization. The promise of unity turned into the threat of uniformity. But will it be enough to see the 'one world' as a dialogue between civilizations? ■



P. J. POLYP

Development ended in Kuwait

The Gulf War as development's final curtain... Global apartheid... The South as a sea of crises which must be managed – militarily.

EVEN those who think that Heraclitus is the name of a rock formation know the two phrases that the philosopher of Ephesus bequeathed to the West's heritage of quotations. 'All things flow: nothing abides' was the formula he used to describe the continuous coming and going of existence. However, as history does not always flow slowly and quietly, but sometimes surges forward impetuously, Heraclitus coined the other phrase: 'War is the mother of all things'.

Heraclitus was referring to the clash between opposites in general, but there is considerable truth in the meaning that people generally give it: wars very often accelerate history, precipitate events and create new perspectives. My opinion is that the Gulf War marks the final curtain on the era in which the relationships between the North and South of the world could be considered in terms of 'development'. In its

place, a new era is dawning in which relationships with the Third World will be dominated by the concept of 'security'.

The war made clear one essential fact: the terrifying technological divide that today, more than ever, separates the richer countries from all the others. This is a divide that expresses itself in macabre statistics: 115 American soldiers lost their lives as opposed to 100,000 Iraqis, a 1 to 1,000 ratio which must be unique in the history of war. In spite of the inhuman efforts which Iraq made to arm itself to the teeth, its army was wiped out because, technologically, it had remained at the level of the 1970s. The defeat of Saddam Hussein, however desirable it might have been, became the symbol of the speed of innovation in the First World and of the powerlessness of the Third.

It is no longer possible to deny it: the idea that all the countries in the world were

marching along a common road was but a post-Second World War mirage. It is no longer possible to say that everyone is moving in an interdependent economic space. On the contrary, the international super-economy of the North and the poor economy of the South are separated by a wall.

Much time has passed since, as in the Brandt Report of 1980, the North was considered the South's engine of growth. It is still longer since the North was dependent on raw materials, agricultural commodities and cheap labour – all things that a highly technologized economy can substitute with increasing ease. The North no longer needs the South: it can prosper on the exclusion of the rest of the world. The world is no longer divided between capitalism and communism, but between fast economies and slow economies – to quote Alvin Toffler. In the wake of the Gulf War it has become obvious that the nations of

the world are not at different points on the same road, as the image of 'development' implies, but are rigidly separated in a situation of planetary apartheid.

The way the peoples of the South are perceived is changing as a result. For Truman, Third World societies were indeed poor, but also full of potential. They were 'young' nations and 'emerging', whose future was to shine more splendidly than their present. Such optimism is implicit in the very idea of development: where should the road of progress lead, if not to the promised land?

In a situation of world apartheid, this concept collapses. No-one speaks any more of a radiant tomorrow; the future appears grim and the South is seen as the breeding ground of all crises. In a world divided, the countries of the South are no longer looked at with hope but with suspicion. In the cynical eye of the privileged, development aid is done for and the job at hand is to keep a latent explosive force under control.

The Gulf War made it clear, once and for all, that Third World countries are now risk zones. All kinds of dangers are to be found there, as the newspapers and television keep telling us: violence keeps exploding, the mafia is in command, epidemics are spreading, deserts are advancing, ideologies are rampant, and everywhere the demographic bomb is looming. And even the stronghold of the North is not immune from the threat of immigration, the greenhouse effect, drug traffic, terrorism and war: the 'one world' is discovering the boomerang effect of degradation. The more the threatening dangers strike fear into people's minds, the more the image of 'The Other' takes on a different colouring. During the centuries it has been identified with the pagan, then with the savage, then with the indigenous and finally with the poor, which today embodies the 'risk factor'.

In these circumstances, the 'development' concept loses its reassuring connotations for the future: slowly it is being substituted by the concept of 'security' – from the North's viewpoint, naturally. There are already many development projects which have little to do with taking a country along the road to progress and which simply content themselves with trying to prevent the worst on a once-only basis. Once, the order of the day was to 'catch up' with the North. Now the aim must be to avoid being engulfed by disaster and to engage in 'security for survival'.

At the international level, too, the change of theme has been under way for some time. Whereas, in the past, the discussion at conferences was about how to give the South more opportunities to enter into the world's economic growth, today conferences analyze how to keep the excesses of such growth under control. Governments are concerned about the signs of weakness in the biosphere – pollution of the seas, the ozone hole, global warming. Who should eliminate emissions, and how much, and in

what time span? Who can claim what compensation? The focus of international negotiations has changed: the division of wealth has been replaced on the agenda by the division of risks.

Amidst all this, the way that the North perceives itself has had to change too. Truman was proud to consider US dominance not from a colonial viewpoint, as the trustee of peoples who are still under age, but rather in terms of the economic prosperity of the whole world. It was in line with this that institutions for 'aid' and 'co-operation' were set up.

Little has remained of all this under planetary apartheid: today, for reasons of self-defence, the North must stop itself being pulled down by the collapse of the South. From now on, the North will claim that it is obliged to dominate so as to protect the stability of the world system.

On 1 April 1991 *Time* magazine dedicated its front cover to fears about security, showing a uniformed body wearing a sheriff's badge marked 'Global Cop'. The new attitude has its military expression in the present planning of a multinational intervention force. Whether this belongs to the Western European Union, NATO or the UN is of secondary importance. What is under way is an epoch-making reorientation of the military apparatus towards war of low and medium intensity in the South of the world (and in the East, which is slowly slipping towards the South).

In a more charity-orientated variation, troops are being sent to relieve people who are struck by natural disasters, as in Bangladesh and Kurdistan, while one is beginning to hear talk of 'green helmets' to intervene in the case of ecological disasters. And people are talking about the planetary environmental crisis in terms of 'ecological security'. Ecology, once the

rallying cry for new public virtues, has become a problem of security policy. Satellites are launched that keep an eye on far-away countries – veritable environmental spies.

Global security is beginning to justify anything – just as it united the international community against the dictator of Baghdad. Rich countries are now increasing their diplomatic, charity and military instruments for risk prevention. But where there is no justice, there cannot be peace. Security has replaced development as the global guiding light – another tragic consequence of the continuing arrogance of power. ■

Planting a marker for the world. On the Kuwait—Iraq border, US soldiers make a territorial statement of their own.



What then can we do?

We can agree that the Western development model has been damaging – but what does that mean we should do about it? This page is devoted to ideas for new thinking, reading and action we can explore if we accept the premise of this NI issue.

Thinking

1 Whenever you encounter the word 'development' try and substitute another word or phrase that makes it clearer what is meant. 'Development' can mean anything to anybody, with the result that people with very different agendas (the IMF and the NI, for example) can feel safe under its banner. As an example we looked at the line 'The people, the ideas, the action in the fight for world development' which has appeared on the magazine's front cover since its early years. We concluded that the best substitute word in this case would be 'justice' (the IMF would be unlikely to choose the same translation).

2 Start questioning the idea of government aid. This is often given with strings, tied to

contracts for companies from the donor country. But even when it is not, it almost always encourages a nation to develop in a Western economic direction which may be disastrous for local people. Big dam projects which displace thousands of native people from their traditional lands are only the most naked and spectacular examples. Debt relief and a fairer world trading system are much more important goals than an increased aid programme.

3 Look critically at the charities you support to see how beholden they are to the traditional development model. The best of them will be promoting 'grass-roots development' – which means giving individuals and small communities more control over their own lives. Independent charities are far more likely to be

sensitive to the cultural context they are working in than official aid donors – but they are still bound to be agents of Westernization to some extent.

4 Start taking green politics seriously. Politicians from the main parties in all Western countries jockey for position as guarantors of economic growth. In a few decades time this obsession with growth will seem like lunacy. We should do all we can to ensure that a radical green programme challenges the politics of the market in all its various guises.

5 Celebrate diversity. The NI has long campaigned for a One World consciousness which sees people from other cultures and continents as human beings with much the same needs and dreams as our own. The sense of kinship this promotes is invaluable. But we also need to understand and value the difference of other people's cultural roots. This involves developing in two directions at the same time – towards unity and towards diversity (as when Scotland and Wales seek autonomy within European union).

ACTION DIRECTORY

INTERNATIONAL

Cultures and Development, a South-North Network, 174 rue Joseph II, B-1040 Brussels, Belgium. Tel: (322) 230-4637. A growing worldwide network of voluntary agencies and interest groups which aims to promote a culture-sensitive approach to development.

AOTEAROA/NEW ZEALAND
International Committee of the National Maori Congress, contact Aroha Mead, 9 Bourbon Street, Karori, Wellington. Tel: (04) 476-2205. Set up by the United Tribes of Aotearoa, this aims to develop a Maori foreign policy and has a strong alternative view of development.

Pacific Institute of Resource Management, PO Box 10-123 The Terrace, Wellington. Tel: (04) 472-6375. Centre for research into alternative approaches to environment and development.

AUSTRALIA

Aboriginal Provisional Government, GPO Box 2025, Brisbane, Queensland 4001. Tel: (07) 839-9322. One of a few such provisional governments which offer an alternative platform on aboriginal issues.

Action for World Development, 56 Foster Street, Surry Hills, NSW 2010. Tel: (02) 212 5275. An action and education group promoting fair trade and equitable development.

Force 10, 379 Kent Street, Sydney, NSW 2000. Tel: (02) 299 2215. A small non-denominational church agency with high ideals. Focuses on sustainable development and

employs mainly indigenous workers.
Pay the Rent Group, PO Box 117, Fitzroy, Vic 3065. Tel: (03) 478-6181. Aims to get non-Aboriginal groups to pay a proportion of their income as 'rent' to Aboriginal people.

CANADA

Grand Council of the Crees, 24 Bayswatch Avenue, Ottawa, Ontario. Tel: (613) 761-1655. Fighting the huge James Bay Hydro scheme in Northern Quebec.

Inter-Pares, 58 Arthur Street, Ottawa, Ont K1R 7B9. Supports a wide range of social-action groups and alternative development projects.

Lonefighters National Committee, 455 12th Street NW, Calgary, Alberta T2N 1X7. Fighting the building of a destructive dam in Southern Alberta.

New Catalyst, PO Box 189, Gabriola Island, BC, V04 1X0. Newsletter of the radical ecology movement.

Office of the Gitksan and Wet'suwet'en People, PO Box 229, Hazelton, BC, V0J 1Y0. Centre of one of the biggest land-claim struggles in northern British Columbia.

USC Canada, 56 Sparks Street, Ottawa, Ontario K1P 5B1. Tel: (613) 234-6827. USC's Seeds of Survival Program (see Page 10) works with Ethiopian farmers and scientists to conserve and enhance that country's vital food seed base, thereby also contributing to global food security.

UNITED KINGDOM

The Ecologist, Corner House, Station Road, Sturminster Newton, Dorset DT10 1BB. Tel: (0258) 73476.

Long a doughty campaigner with a Deep Green perspective; this bi-monthly journal's views once seemed marginal but now seem ever more central.

The Ladakh Project, 21 Victoria Square, Clifton, Bristol BS8 4ES. Tel: (0272) 731575. See Page 10 for details of their work in Ladakh.

Schumacher College, The Old Postern, Dartington, Totnes, Devon TQ9 6EA. Tel: (0803) 865934. Open college offering the chance to study with key alternative/green thinkers.

Survival International, 310 Edgware Road, London W2 1DY. Tel: (071) 723-5535. The leading campaigner for the world's threatened native peoples and cultures.

UNITED STATES

Food First, 145 Ninth Street, San Francisco, CA 94103. Advocates of basic-needs development; and supporters of groups in Central America and the Philippines.

Grassroots International, 48 Grove Street #103, Somerville, Mass 02144. Supports grassroots-development groups in the Middle East, the Philippines and Haiti.

Institute for Social Ecology, PO Box 384, Rochester, Vermont 05767. Runs an excellent summer school on the theory and practice of radical social ecology.

The Ladakh Project, PO Box 9475, Berkeley, CA 94709. Tel: (510) 527-3873. See Page 10 for details of this.

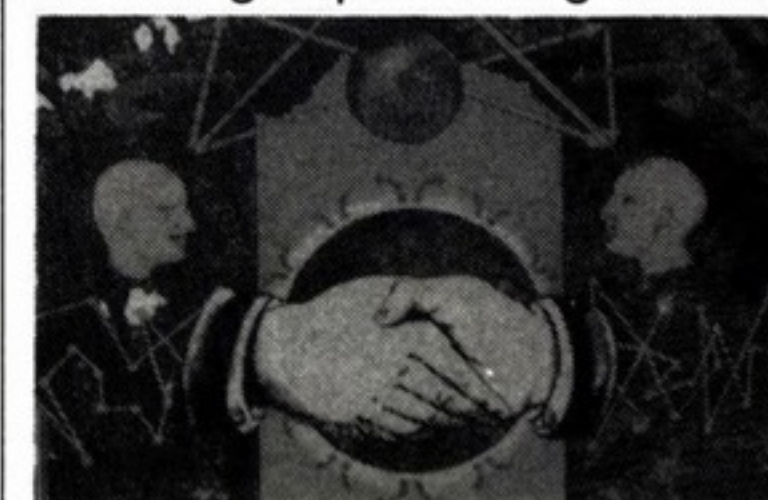
Planet Drum, PO Box 31251, San Francisco, CA 94131. Centre for disseminating ideas about decentralized development and government.

Reading

The best place to start following up the ideas in this issue is with a recent book edited by Wolfgang Sachs himself and containing two of the seven essays in this issue. This is **The Development Dictionary** (Zed Press). Seventeen thinkers from around the world, who were originally inspired and brought together by the philosopher Ivan Illich (himself a contributor), take a highly critical look at different aspects of the development idea.

The Development Dictionary is powerful and persuasive; it is hard to imagine anyone emerging from it with their faith in the standard development model unshaken. But what do we set in its place? Another recent book which contains three of the Wolfgang Sachs essays from this issue aims to start the work of envisioning a new economic model to set against the world market juggernaut. **Real-life Economics**, edited by Paul Ekins and Manfred Max-Neef (Routledge), is again a wide-ranging anthology of contributions by independent thinkers from around the world. It is often quite technical but the theoretical work here is vital: the hard questions about 'green economics' are finally being addressed.

Two other recent books by Paul Ekins are worth looking out for. **A New World Order – grassroots movements for global change** (Routledge) offers pen portraits of individuals and groups working so suc-



cessfully for change that they have been given the Right Livelihood Award (the Alternative Nobel Prize). **Wealth Beyond Measure** (Gaia) is a laudable attempt to convey the ideas of the new green economics via bite-sized chunks of text and liberal use of graphics and illustrations. Both these books leave you with the sense that an alternative way forward is taking shape – and is already benefitting the lives of people all over the planet.

Thierry Verhelst's **No Life Without Roots** (Zed) is a persuasive attempt to get people associated with voluntary aid agencies to question the kind of development they are pushing – and to stress both how different and how important are people's various cultural roots.

HAITI



ROGER HUTCHINGS / CAMERA PRESS

Ghostland

Coup revives Tonton Macoutes

ON 30 September 1991 Haiti's short-lived democracy came to an abrupt end. Brutal repression has followed – worse even than the 30-year 'Papa Doc' Duvalier dictatorship, according to some eyewitness accounts.

Ministers, journalists, priests, community workers, human rights activists, students and other supporters of the deposed President Jean Baptiste Aristide have been the targets of selective repression. More general and widespread repression covers the country, aimed at stamping out any form of criticism of the illegal government. Pro-Aristide radio stations have been closed down, the TV and

press are all in the hands of the Government. Communication with the outside world has become virtually impossible.

Meanwhile, Radio VSN57 ('Volunteers for National Security' – the 57 refers to the year when the Duvalier dictatorship began) urges the remobilization of Duvalier's paramilitary force, the Tonton Macoutes, and broadcasts the names, addresses and phone numbers of Aristide supporters. One broadcast went as follows: 'We need to neutralize... all those who organize chaos in this country... crush them, eat them, drink their blood...'

According to a source inside Haiti, total deaths in the first few days of the military coup were between 1,000 and 1,500 – in one hospital alone, 300 deaths were reported on the first day. Port-au-Prince, Cap Haitien and

Jeremie have now become ghost towns where people prefer to stay indoors rather than face the military's violence on the streets.

The Vatican was the only state in the world not to condemn the coup. China has since vetoed any move by the UN towards military intervention or a multinational peacekeeping force, arguing that this would constitute interference in the internal affairs of a sovereign state. An economic embargo has been in force from October, but commercial ships constantly leave Miami for Haiti under the guise of humanitarian missions.

At least 14,000 Haitians have so far fled in boats, heading for the US. Most have been refused entry and held in detention camps – some have been sent back to Haiti. Aristide himself, now in exile, has confirmed that repatriated refugees have been arrested and beaten. But Richard Boucher, State Department spokesperson, claims that 'we have no documented reports or evidence that people who have been repatriated have been subject to persecution'.

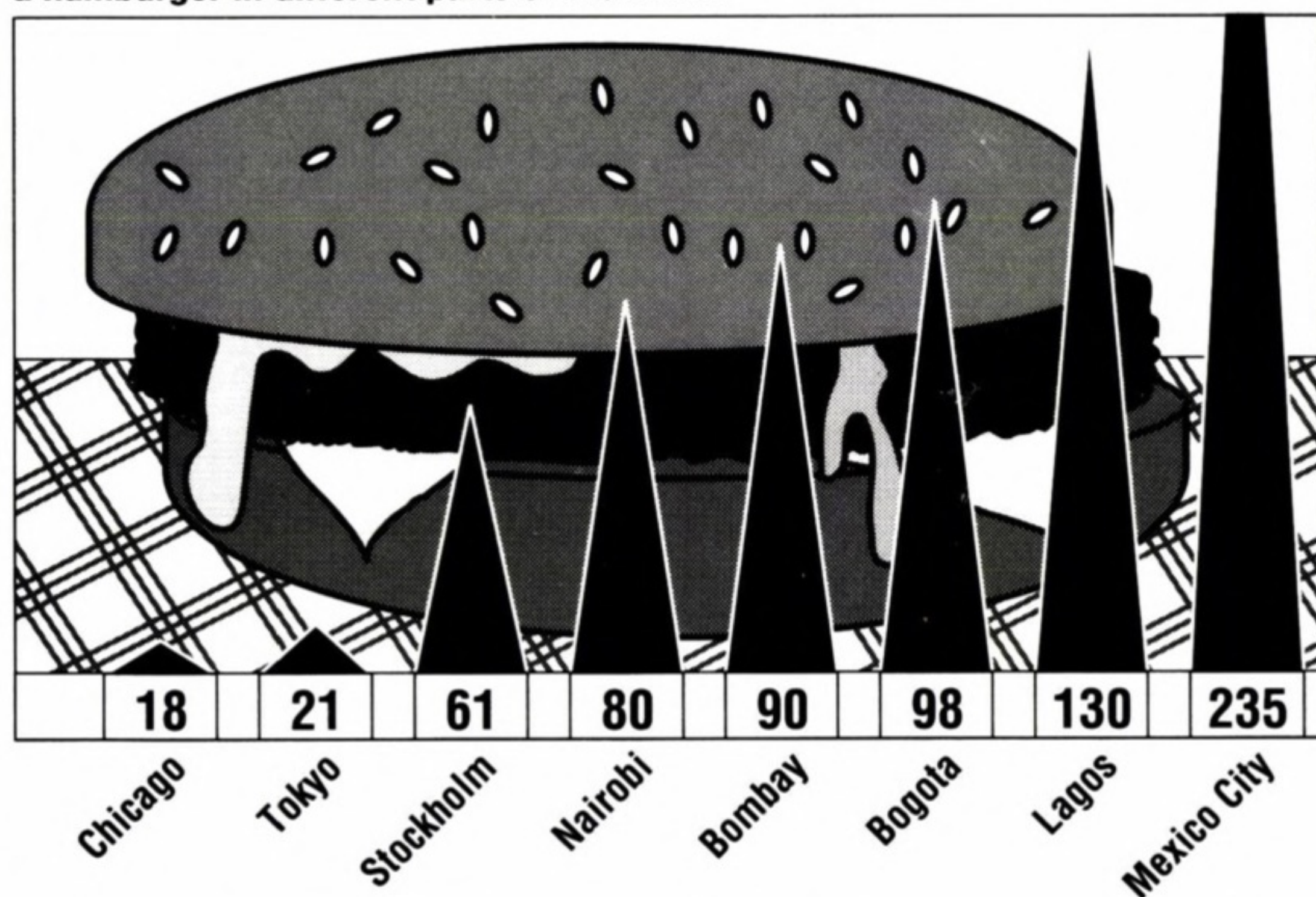
The US has close links with the Haitian army, which it created while occupying the island between 1915 and 1934. Three quarters of Haitian trade is with the US. In February the US moved to soften its trade embargo, under pressure from US businessmen – Haitian factories assembling parts for US manufacturers have been badly affected.

Father Antoine Adrien, a Roman Catholic priest and close adviser to Aristide comments: 'I don't think the US wants Aristide back. It is obviously because Aristide is not under their control. He is not their puppet.' So the prospect of direct US intervention to support, rather than overturn, democratic government in the region looks unlikely. The people of the poorest country in the Americas have been left to their own devices.

Angelina Guillochon / Costa Rica

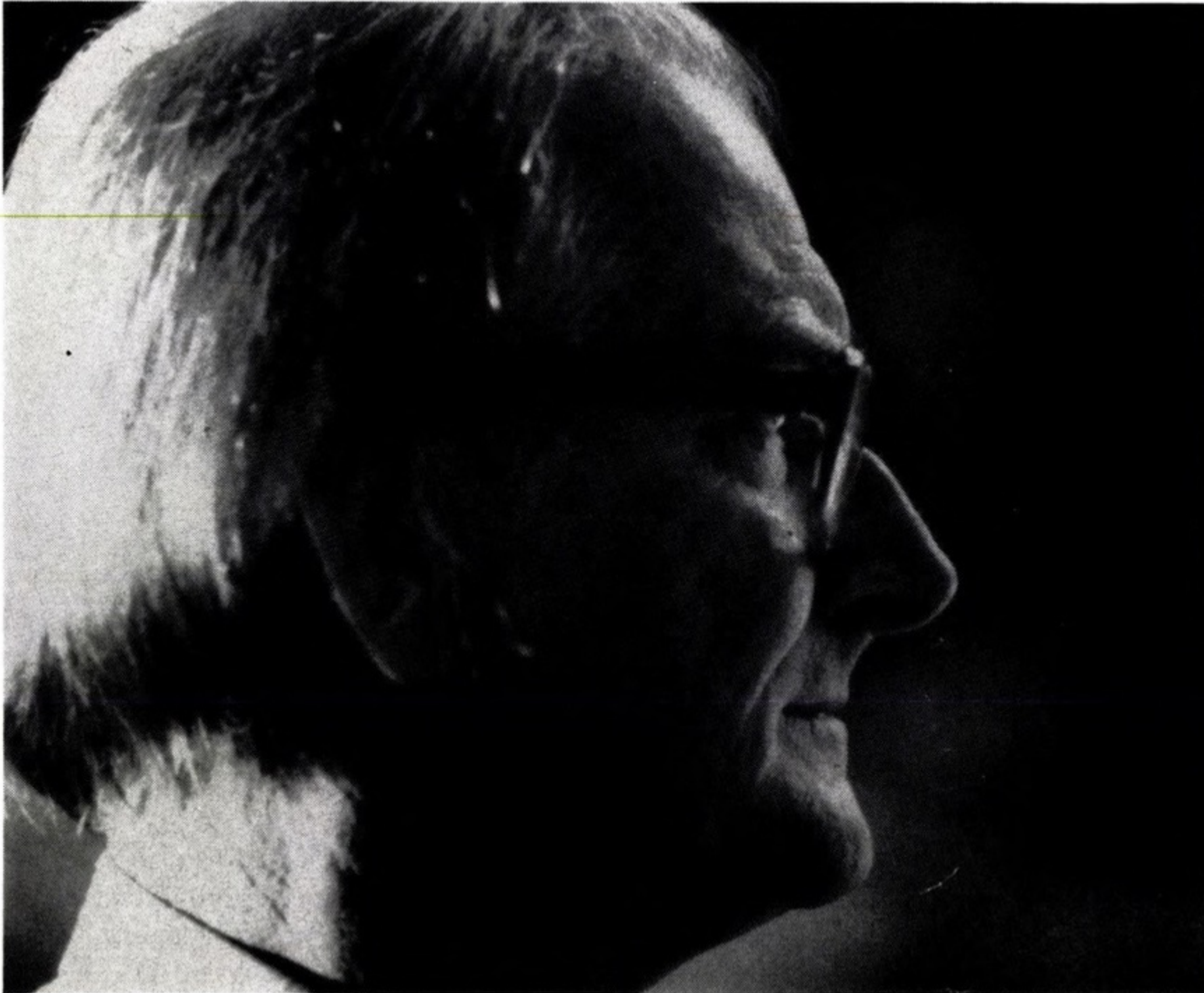
THE COST OF LIVING

This is how long you have to work (in minutes) to buy a hamburger in different parts of the world.



SOURCE: THE UNION BANK SURVEY

ENVIRONMENT



SUSAN I. CUNNINGHAM

Felling Mr Clean

Brazil's outspoken Environment Secretary gets the sack

DR José Lutzenberger, the internationally-renowned Brazilian ecologist and Environment Secretary, has been sacked by President Fernando Collor de Mello following a series of public clashes with his subordinates at IBAMA, the Federal Environment Institute, over accusations of corruption in the agency.

Speaking after his dismissal, Dr Lutzenberger claimed he was the victim of a 'vicious campaign' by timber companies and their allies within IBAMA. He said he had even worried that his life might be in danger from the 'powerful forces' he offended by ordering the suspension of all logging permits a month ago, pending investigation of corruption allegations.

Though Dr Lutzenberger himself blames pressure from logging interests for his removal, his downfall may be linked to other outspoken declarations. He recently clashed with World Bank Chief Economist Lawrence Summers over the latter's recommendations for toxic wastes and polluting industries to be exported to the Third World, and criticized Maurice Strong, Secretary General of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) for asserting that \$150 billion would need to be spent on environment issues. Dr Lutzenberger stated that 'large sums attract corruption'.

This statement was interpreted as a warning to potential donors not to invest in large-scale environmental aid for Brazil, and led

the Environment Secretary to be accused of undermining his own government's attempts to raise funding for environmental programmes. Dr Lutzenberger later denied that he had been referring specifically to Brazil, but emphasized his worry at the possible negative impact of 'big money', declaring that 'with environmentally correct policies, we may end up needing less money rather than more'.

President Collor's choice for an interim Environment Secretary, entrusted with steering the department through UNCED – which takes place in Rio de Janeiro in June – fell on the current Education Minister, Dr José Goldemberg. A nuclear physicist and former rector of the University of São Paulo, Dr Goldemberg is a respected scientist but has few friends in the Brazilian environmental movement, where he is seen as a technocrat and advocate of nuclear power. He clashed with Lutzenberger last year after publicly opposing the demarcation of the territory of the Yanomami Indians as a Reserve.

One of Dr Goldemberg's first actions in his new job was to fly to New York and try to smooth over the consequences of his predecessor's declarations on the risks of corruption where large-scale funding was involved. His mission was to reassure multi-lateral donors, such as the World Bank and the G-7 countries, that it's 'business as usual' in Brazil. ■

Alex Shankland / São Paulo

Cuba engaged

Each year 60 million attempts are made to telephone Cuba from the US; only 500,000 get through. Just 79 lines are available because, since 1962, the US has prohibited all commercial dealings with Fidel Castro's government. Since 1966 the Cubans have not received their share of the price of the calls, estimated to be worth at least \$60 million. Now American Telephone and Telegraph (AT&T) wants to open up communications with Cuba, and with Vietnam and North Korea too. If accepted, the AT&T offer would make possible 750,000 calls to Cuba using an outdated cable salvaged from beneath the Atlantic, where it once carried calls between the US and the UK.



Source: The Economist vol 322 no 7751

Sperm countdown

The quality of human semen is declining worldwide, according to professors Niels Kieding and Nils Erik Skakkeback of the University of Copenhagen. At a recent WHO meeting they presented data on some 15,000 men, showing that from 1938 to 1990 average sperm counts declined by almost half. In 1938 the average was 113 million sperm per millilitre of semen; today it is 66 million. A decline of this magnitude in such a short time, says Skakkeback, must be caused by environmental conditions rather than by genetic predisposition.

Source: Tine Eiby, 'Klassekampen', Oslo

Submarine power

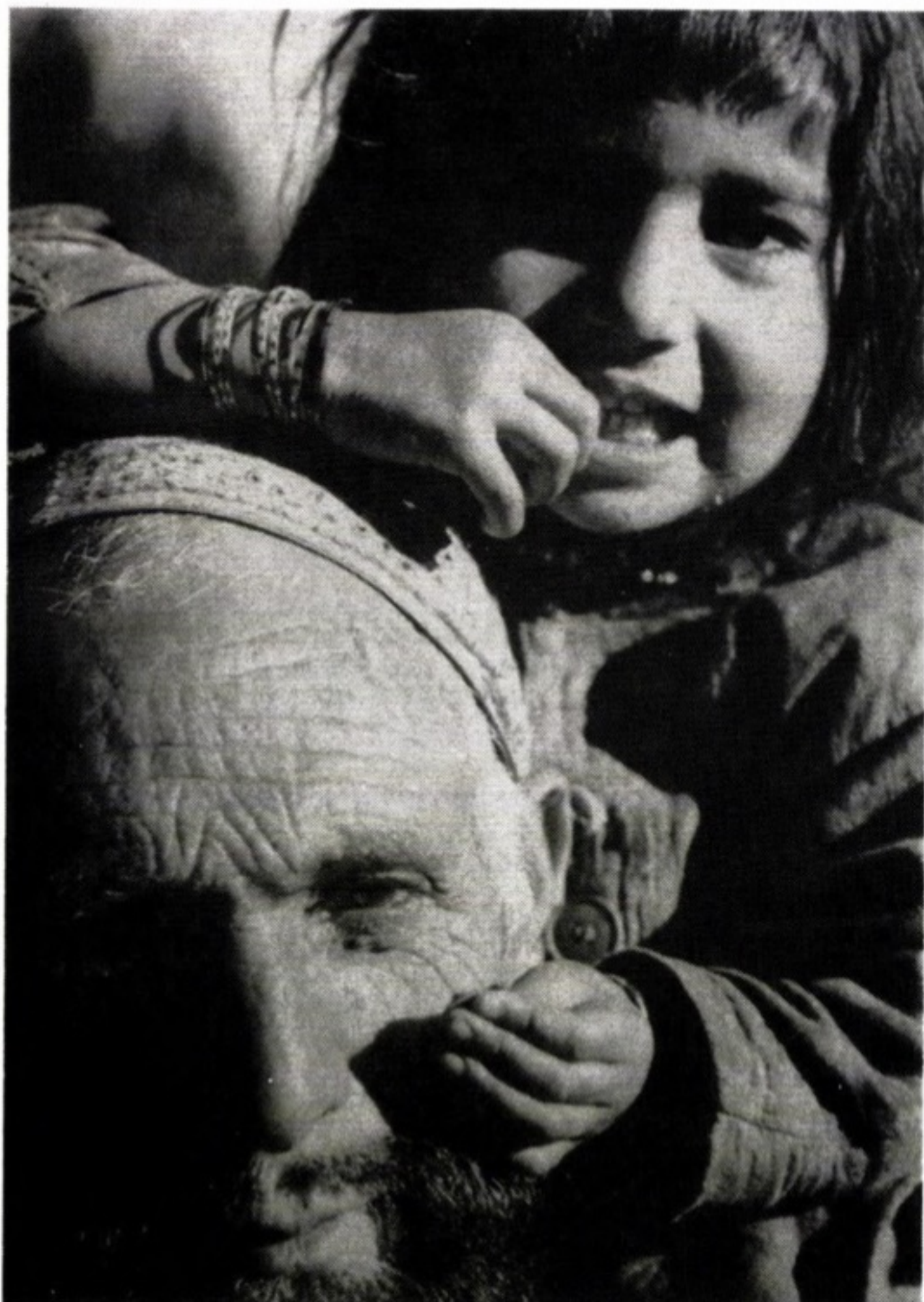
The Philippines has a chronic, nation-wide power shortage. Attempts to meet the shortfall with nuclear power have been foiled since the \$2.1 billion Bataan plant was shut down in 1986 because the site lay near two geological faults and within 50 kilometres of Mount Pinatubo. The Government is now reported to be negotiating a new barter deal with the Russian authorities: to buy six nuclear submarines and use their reactors as power stations.



Source: James Pattison / Philippine Resource Centre

CAMERA PRESS

BHUTAN



MARK EDWARDS

Hindus in Bhutan: the Buddhist push comes to shove.

all is Bhutan's attempt to keep at bay the Hindu culture and maintain the dominance of the Drukpa people.

In the Government's recently introduced seven-point status system, Number One is reserved for those of pure Drukpa blood. These people, settled in the north of the country, are of Tibetan stock and form the aristocracy. They are Buddhists, wear the *baku* dress and speak the Dzongkha language.

Over the past two centuries and more the southern part of the country has slowly been settled by ethnic Nepalis, many of them encouraged to come by the Drukpa to do their unskilled jobs. These people are of a lower socio-economic status and are largely Hindus, with their attendant customs, culture and dress.

The problems began when the Nepali population grew at a faster rate than the Drukpa,

helped along by a steady influx of new immigrants. They now form half the population. New laws were introduced forcing everyone to wear *baku* dress, adopt the Drukpa hairstyle – short for women: Hindus traditionally wear long hair – and speak Dzongkha. In response the largely Nepali-backed Bhutan People's Party began to push for equal representation on the National Assembly, for multi-party democracy and for the freedom to practice their own culture.

Reprisals soon followed. Activists have been thrown in jail and beaten, women raped and families press-ganged into working for the army. Even those with valid citizenship have been fleeing. But, despite their treatment in Bhutan, most refugees want to return. 'We want to go back home,' they say.

Joy Stephens/Kathmandu

Persecution by numbers

Buddhists kick out Hindus

WHEN Dal Man Gurung was told to report to the Bhutan authorities at his birthplace he had no worries. His family had lived in Bhutan for almost 150 years, although he is an ethnic Nepali. To his dismay he found himself classified as 'Number Seven' – an illegal immigrant – and told to leave the country within 24 hours.

Dal Man is just one of tens of thousands of ethnic Nepalis who have left Bhutan over the past two years, some expelled by the Government, others fleeing restrictions and intimidation by the police. At the root of it

Beware of white coats!

White coats could pose a health hazard to the world at large, according to a group of Dutch researchers. These symbols of the efficient, well-managed laboratory provide the perfect escape route for large numbers of possibly dangerous, genetically engi-



neered bacteria. They survive on wet coats that dry at the laboratory before being sent to the laundry. The first step of a commercial wash is to soak the coats in water at 35 degrees – just the right condition to release the E.coli bacterium widely used in genetic engineering. The water, with added E.coli, is flushed straight into the sewerage system.

Source: New Scientist no 1813

END

END Quote

"There's lots of money floating around, and there's not much to spend it on in a country like Burma."

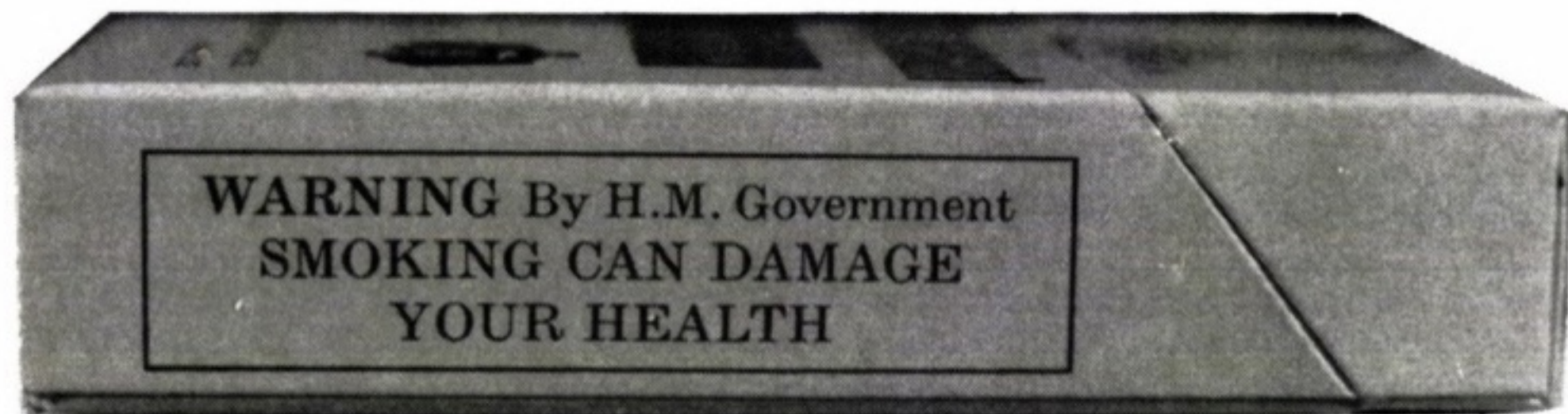
Barry J Shea, Pepsi-Cola International vice president for South East Asia, announcing the launch of Pepsi in the Myanmar/Burma dictatorship on November 22 1991

"I, who all my life have been sensitive to banal phrases, who criticized their content, now feel an involuntary temptation to resort to such phrases for professional reasons."

Vaclav Havel, President of Czechoslovakia

"Nowadays it's increasingly difficult to take photographs in the street. Everyone says they 'own' their image. If you don't have a lawyer in tow you risk being sued."

Henri Cartier-Bresson, photographer and a founder of the Magnum photo agency, explaining why he now prefers to draw.



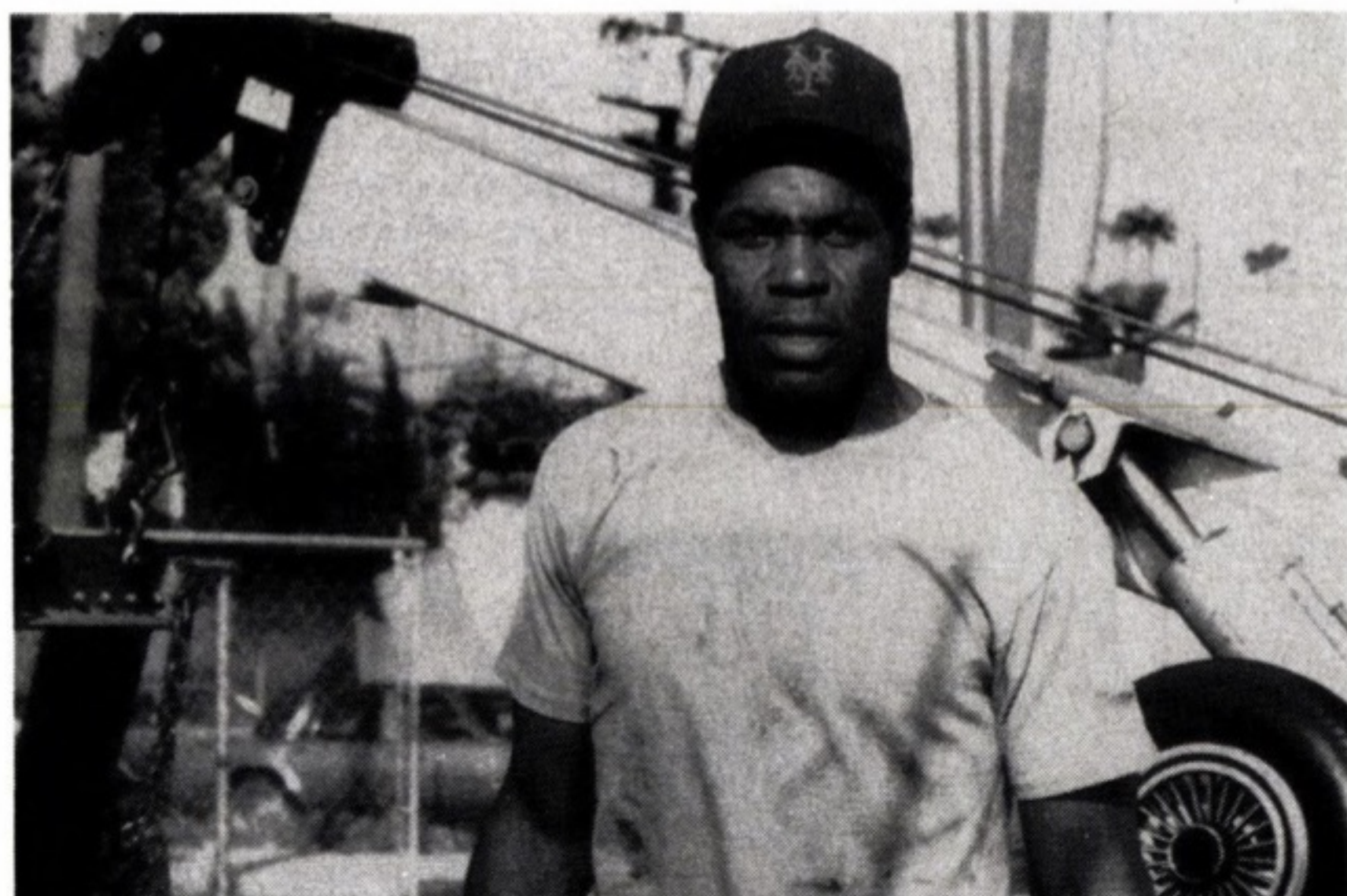
Unlucky strike

BAT Industries, one of the world's largest tobacco conglomerates, has announced profits for 1991 that 'comfortably broke the one billion pounds sterling barrier for the first time'. According to Chairman Sir Patrick Sheehy, 'Lucky Strike made exciting

progress in Europe and Latin America, as well as maintaining, along with Kent, its impressive performance in the Far East... State Express 555 continued to shine in the Far East...'

Source: BAT Industries Preliminary Announcement, year to 31/12/91

JOHN BLAU / CAMERA PRESS



Knight in shining black armour: Danny Glover in *Grand Canyon*.



films

Grand Canyon

directed by Lawrence Kasdan

In 1983 Lawrence Kasdan summed up the anxieties and morals of his generation in *The Big Chill*. Nine years on he's tried to do it again, only this time on a far grander scale, with his cross-section of characters brought together not by one trauma – the suicide of a college friend – but by a whole succession of them.

Lawyer Kevin Kline is nearly murdered when his car breaks down in a black neighbourhood of Los Angeles. He's saved by tow-truck driver Danny Glover, who has his own problems: a deaf daughter and a sister trapped in a gang-infested ghetto. Meanwhile Kline's wife (Mary McDonnell) has found an abandoned baby and his best friend, film producer Steve Martin, has been shot by a mugger.

Using the *Grand Canyon* as an all-purpose metaphor for the divisions opening up in American society, Kasdan tries to address the state of the nation in a way few Hollywood film-makers have risked in recent years, and he's been rewarded with the Golden Bear at the Berlin Film Festival. The best explanation for this award is that the film seems more profound in a foreign language since the harder Kasdan tries to be serious, the more he falls back on platitudes. Treating LA as a microcosm of the country is fair enough, but the city and its entertainment industry seem to make up Kasdan's whole universe.

Many of the situations here seem to have filtered through from other movies – the breakdown from *The Bonfire of the Vanities*, the gang violence from *Boyz n the Hood*, the post-shoot-

ing mid-life crisis from *Regarding Henry*. And the Steve Martin character, a producer of mindless big-budget action movies, seems to exist only to make film-makers like Kasdan seem socially responsible by comparison.

Politics ☆

Entertainment ☆☆☆

The Mambo Kings

directed by Arne Glimcher

That Spanish will shortly be the dominant language of the US is the best-kept secret in Hollywood. In the US media it's considered a major breakthrough when Madonna slips a few words of Spanish into a record – it's called 'acknowledging' the Latin public.

The Mambo Kings acknowledges Latin culture in the US, but again in the most offhand way. It's based on Oscar Hijuelos's Pulitzer-winning novel, a sharp, animated grapple with the myths of machismo and the meaning of the American Dream for Cuban immigrants (this is set in 1952, well before the Revolution). The film gives the book a cursory dusting-down, retaining only the pot-boiler elements that can be put to the service of a 'torrid' narrative.

This is essentially a Latin-flavoured rerun of *The Fabulous Baker Boys*, that melancholy look at sibling rivalry on the supper-club circuit. Here the brothers are musicians (Armand Assante and Antonio Banderas), who flee Cuba after a romantic imbroglio and hit New York in search of glory. The film focuses primarily on Assante's flamboyant performance as a manic Lothario and king of forced smiles, but the tension between the brothers, their dream and their loves, is left buried under a cluttered mass of events.

What's missing is any sense of Cuban identity. The pre-Revolution setting makes it easier for director Glimcher to ignore all political themes and concentrate on a vague idea of period style,

while casting a Spanish actor and a Dutch actress as Cubans shows rare disregard for the finer points of accent. Salsa queen Celia Cruz is on hand as a sort of benign chorus – but singing in English, which is barely thinkable.

The Mambo Kings finds Hollywood 'acknowledging' Latin culture while showing a predictable contempt for it.

Politics ☆

Entertainment ☆☆☆



books

Beyond the Storm

A Gulf Crisis Reader edited by Phyllis Bennis and Michel Moushabeck (*Olive Branch US, Canongate UK*)

Because Saddam Hussein is a monster, a murderous gangster, it was all too easy for George Bush to portray himself as a knight in shining armour, caparisoned in the colours of the United Nations and bearing a



banner with a strange device, 'New World Order'.

Truth arrives late with its candle; the journey from writer's pen or desktop to the printed and published page takes months. But now the books about the Gulf Crisis are coming out, and *Beyond the Storm* is among the best of them: a collection of 30 articles and essays by writers with a mix of nationalities and specialisms.

It helps make clear how the Gulf War came to happen and what it was really about: how Bush decided early upon war and not sanctions; why Secretary of State Baker needed to make all those journeys to the Middle East and Europe, arm-twisting and bribing to gain support for the Crusade; why the members of the Arab League and the PLO, although they fear and hate Saddam, were reluctant to support military action in the form it

took against him; why 'linkage' with the Israeli situation figured so largely in their thinking; and much more besides that is not commonly realized. In general the writers condemn what happened and are concerned about the consequences.

'War is meant to have a purpose. It should result in a state of peace better than that from which it erupted,' observed Field Marshal Lord Carver. Try applying that criterion to the Gulf War after reading *Beyond the Storm*.

Politics ☆☆☆

Entertainment ☆☆☆

The Right to Choose

by Perdita Huston (*Earthscan*)

Elise Ottesen-Jensen's younger sister Magnhild had her life wrecked by an unplanned pregnancy in an unforgiving society. Magnhild was made to give the baby away, was barred from her nursing career, and ended up in an asylum where she sewed baby clothes obsessively until she died.

Perdita Huston's newest book, *The Right to Choose*, tells the life stories of 12 social-change agents like Elise Ottesen-Jensen, women and men from countries as varied as Sweden and Bangladesh, Mali and Japan, who chose family planning as their method of making women's lives a little fairer and healthier.

Some of them fought their battles over 60 years ago, enduring police harassment and accusations that they were pornographers. But, as Huston's book makes clear, the war is very far from over. Women are still expected to have more babies or fewer according to society's wishes, not their own. Tellingly, in the US the book has a different title – *Motherhood by Choice*. 'Motherhood' is safe enough; reproductive rights for women are still too threatening for those who are used to ruling the roost.

Politics ☆☆☆

Entertainment ☆☆☆



music

Coincidence and Likely Stories

by Buffy Sainte-Marie (*Ensign*)

Is it really as far back as 1965 that UK folk singer Donovan, resplendent in kaftan, beads and a shock of black hair, had a huge success with a bitter protest song called *Universal Soldier*? The song was written by a then little-known mixed-

blood Cree Indian named Buffy Sainte-Marie, who went on to record 15 albums and a notable hit of her own in the heartfelt *Soldier Blue* (the theme song from Mike Nichols' controversial film). This music was often outraged and intensely political, particularly savage in its indictment of the treatment meted out by white America on its indigenous population. At the time much Native American activism was subject to harassment – and Sainte-Marie was no exception.

Disillusioned with this, and discouraged by problems with recording companies, she turned her attention away from adults and carried her message to children. The next five and a half years were spent on *Sesame Street* teaching children about Native American culture though she continued to play benefits on behalf of Leonard Peltier (soon to be the subject of an Oliver Stone movie) and other Native American political prisoners.

It's fitting that she's returned to the recording studio in the year



Buffy Sainte-Marie 20 years on.

of the Columbus quincentennial. And *Coincidence and Likely Stories* shows she has lost none of her extraordinary talent. From pulsating beginning to plaintive end the album throbs with raw energy as Native American musical influences are hauntingly interwoven.

At once angry and tolerant, its central theme of hope and empowerment spears through the songs like a sacred feathered lance skewering the faceless, corrupting 'power junkies' of the world. As she said in a recent interview: 'The assholery in the world is not all there is!'

Buffy Sainte-Marie is back on song with a gem that shines brightly in the darkness.

Politics ★★★★★

Entertainment ★★★★★

STAR RATING

Excellent ★★★★★

Very good ★★★★★

Good ★★★★★

Fair ★★★★★

Poor ★★★★★

Reviews editor: **Chris Brazier**

THE classic

The Golden Notebook

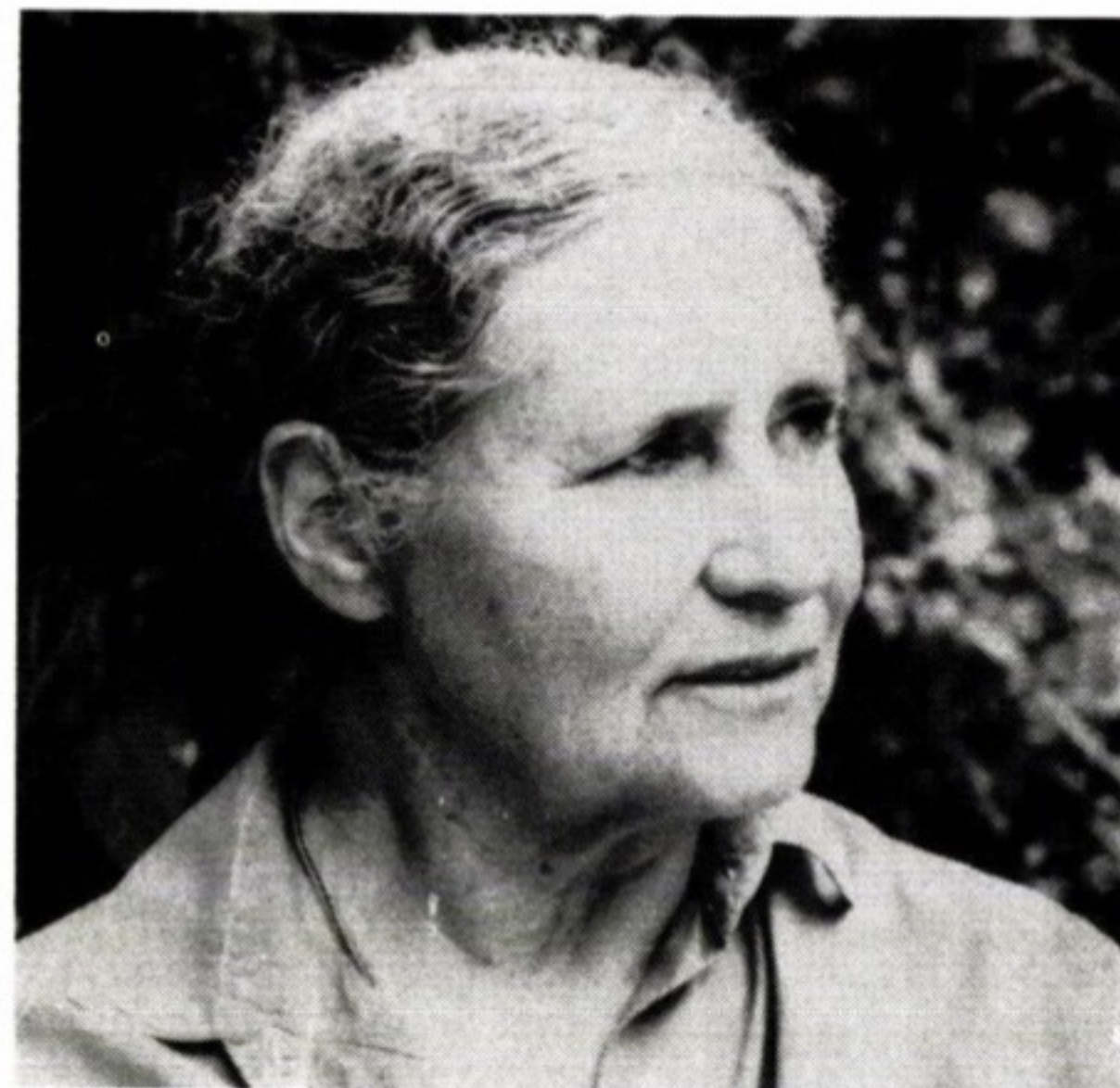
... being the novel that took itself to pieces

As I write the largest state in the world is cracking up and no-one can be certain of the new order (or disorder) which is likely to emerge from its accelerated demise. I've had a rather odd view of the decaying Soviet Union, as I've been enjoying the company of a group of Russian academics who have spent a term visiting the university where I work. As the turbulence in their homeland increased, there came a point when I had to ask what the term 'Soviet Union' meant to them. Nellie, in a reply I'll never forget because of the ironic pride with which it was delivered, announced that she was 'a citizen of the Soviet Disunion'.

Language reflects social change. Being able to name a new experience is the first necessary step towards understanding it, and the necessity of finding a new vocabulary for one's new social being is a key emphasis in Doris Lessing's *The Golden Notebook*, the novel I was re-reading during the Russians' visit. Appropriately, it's a novel about the kind of political crack-up they've been witnessing. It tracks the inner and outer life of Anna Wulf, a novelist and member of the British Communist Party, through the last years of Stalin, Krushchev's denunciation of him, and the Hungarian repression of 1956. Anna is herself a new kind of being, a 'free woman' and single parent who has decided not to marry again after divorce. During these years, she has to find an original language to embody both the falling to pieces of her political life and the emergence of a pioneering sexual self.

Lessing's novel itself is cast in an astonishingly new mould. It's hard to think of any novel prior to this which fused sex, politics, madness and motherhood so completely, and its frankness and honesty predictably caused explosions of controversy on both Right and Left. But it's perhaps more difficult to understand how the very form of the novel imitates and thus takes us through the process of 'cracking up'. For it isn't recognizably a novel at all. It looks instead more like a long series of shattered fragments whose relationship to one another we have to work out for ourselves.

That said, it's not difficult at all to understand what's going on. Nobody ever wrote in plainer language than Doris Lessing. And there's a straightforwardly realistic core to the book. It begins with a chapter from a conventional short novel called *Free Women*. Between the chapters of this novel we are presented with the private notebooks of one of the characters in *Free Women*, Anna Wulf. The notebooks reflect Anna's inability to synthesize her experiences, as each compartmentalizes her – the black notebook treats her ideas and problems as a writer, the red her political life, the yellow her sexual relationships and feelings, and the blue everyday personal events.



PETER LESSING

Towards the end of the novel, becoming aware that these four books fail to capture her whole self, she attempts to convey the totality of her experience in a new (golden) notebook. Although this is simply a record of the onset of madness, its composition somehow releases her, finally, so that she can write the novel which has so far been unthinkable.

Bewilderingly, the reader now discovers that s/he has been reading this novel all along – it is, in fact, *Free Women*. Moreover, it's not a new kind of novel at all, but a conventional, realistic one in which Anna Wulf appears as a relatively sane, whole human being. The knowledge that it is actually Anna (the 'mad' Anna) who has written it comes as an unanticipated shock to most readers. The novel thus forces us to abandon our preconceptions. It startles us into a new form of reading, forces upon us a new experience of reality which 'cracks up' our habitual assumptions and responses. It tells us that things have changed and that we must find a way to negotiate that change.

A generation old it may be, but to me this book seems utterly contemporary in its concerns and its method. Indeed fiction and reality seemed to converge as the British Communist Party abolished itself even as I read. This event did not bewilder my Russian friends half as much as the comparative material plenty they witnessed during their visit, which led them to express political opinions whose frank conservatism alarmed me. In arguing with them I discovered precisely the difficulty of language I mentioned earlier.

For instance, the words 'capitalism' and 'socialism', respectively negative and positive terms in my vocabulary, have exactly inverse values in theirs because these words designate for us experiences which cannot be compared. This struggle between language and experience, it seems to me, requires as much attention as our more obvious economic struggles – and it's that kind of attention, and perhaps even a solution of sorts, which a novel such as *The Golden Notebook* offers. ■

Macdonald Daly

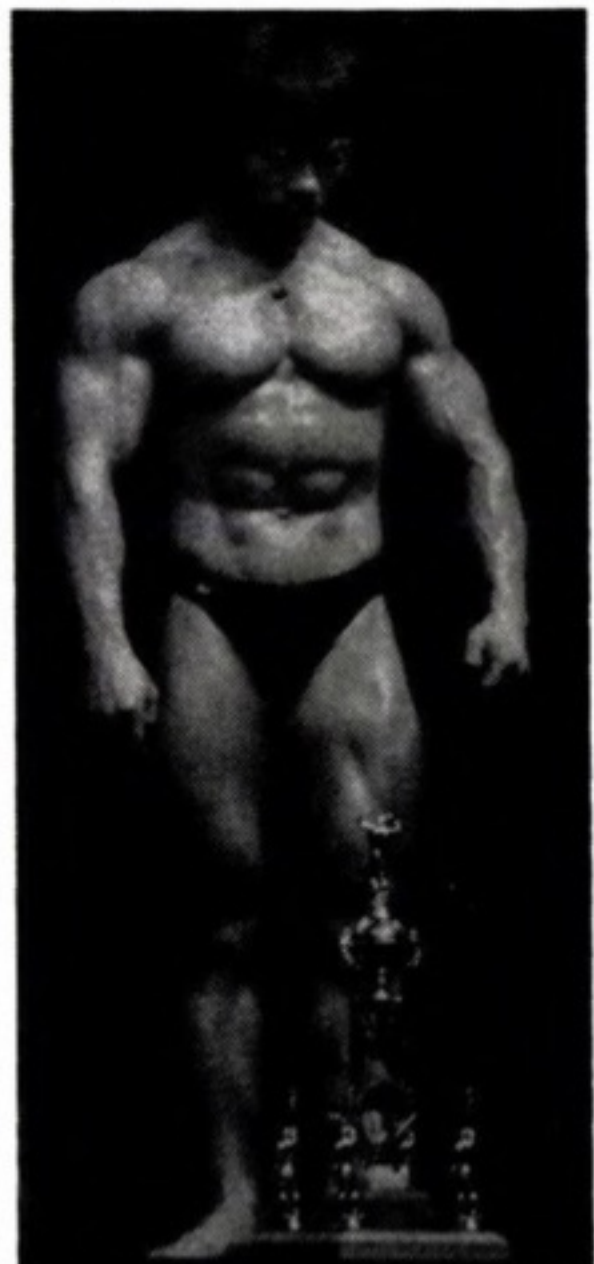
The Golden Notebook by Doris Lessing.



QUESTIONS

...that have always intrigued you about the world will appear in this, your section, and be answered by other readers. Please address your answers and questions to 'Curiosities'.

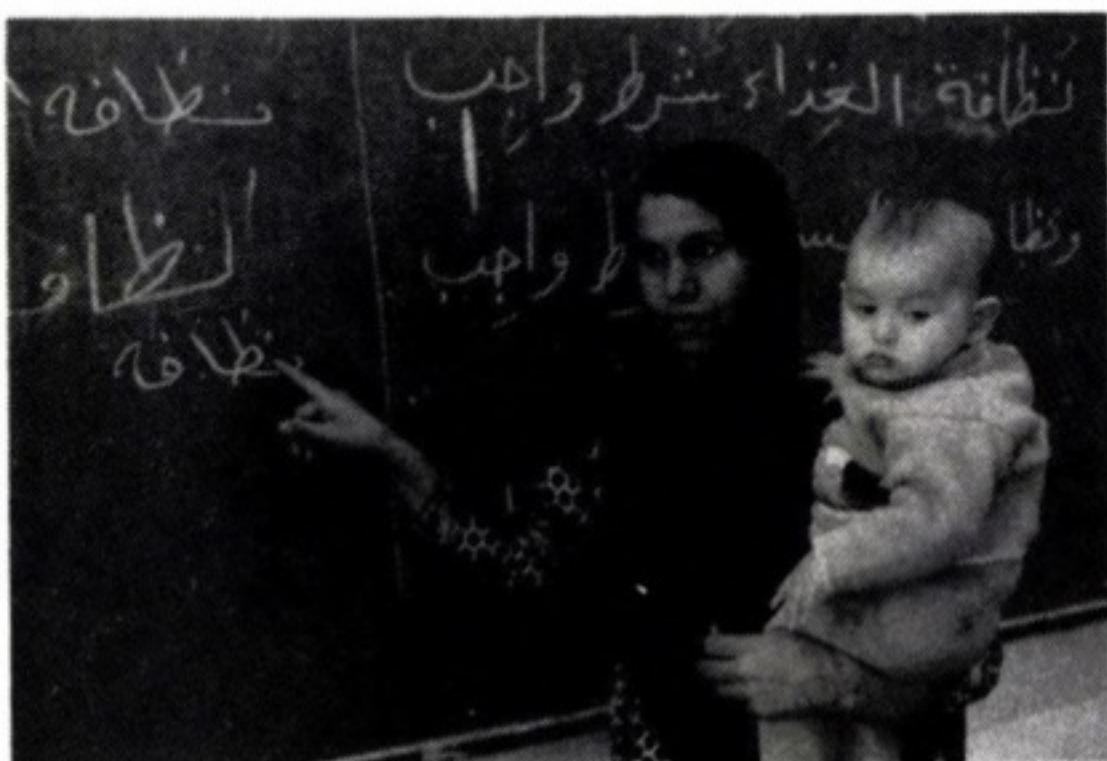
Why do men have nipples?



● The basic model human is one which looks like a pre-pubescent female. People with a single X chromosome are born looking like girls, but never develop sexually. People with XX chromosomes are born looking like girls, and later their extra X chromosome causes their ovaries to produce hormones which make their breasts grow

and their menstrual cycle start. People with XY chromosomes are born looking male because their Y chromosome causes them to grow differently as embryos. Later it leads them to produce hormones which makes them grow beards and bigger muscles. They still retain features of the basic model, like breast tissue and nipples, but as they don't normally produce the right hormones, these don't grow as they do in females. If males take female hormones, however, then they grow breasts.

Dr J S Barrett,
London, UK



Why do some cultures write from left to right and others from right to left?

● In ancient cultures, the earliest use of writing was chiefly in public inscriptions. This took the form of engraving on stone with hammer and chisel. Given the perpetual dominance of the right-handed, the hammer would be held in the right hand and the chisel driven from right to left. Therefore the script developed as a right-to-left form. Once estab-

lished these scripts continued, despite the development of the stylus and slate/clay or the pen and paper where it is easier for the right-handed to 'pull' rather than 'push' the writing implement. Later cultures which inherited these newer 'writing technologies' therefore formed new left-to-right scripts that made for easier use by the right-handed majority.

Francis Boyle,
Yelverton, UK

I've heard that someone has invented a car that runs off chicken manure. Is this true?

● Yes. About 15 years ago a farmer called Bates, I think, who kept many chickens in the British West Country used his chicken manure to produce methane with which he ran his car.

John Anderson,
Shipley, UK

What is the origin of the term 'Left-wing' or 'Right-wing'?

● The use of the word 'wing' is a journalistic addition and we can ignore it. The terms 'left' and 'right' derive from the fact that, in the British Parliament, the Government sits on the right hand side of the Speaker and the Opposition on the Left. The British Government was traditionally seen as supporting the British establishment; therefore pro-establishment views were associated with 'being on the right'. Conversely, anti-establishment views were associated with being 'on the left'. In time, the term 'left' thereby became increasingly associated with socialist thinking and vice versa. The 'Mother of Parliaments' spread the use of the terms throughout the world.

Francis Boyle,
Yelverton, UK

QUESTIONS awaiting your answers:

Is it true that unleaded petrol is less efficient and therefore worse for the environment than leaded in terms of the amount of carbon monoxide and sulphur dioxide produced?

Melvin Waller,
Luton, UK

Why is it inadvisable – or dangerous – to allow victims of electrical torture to take fluids until many hours after the ordeal?

M Morgans,
Preston, UK

What were the origins of the Geneva Convention?

B Hastings,
Rugby, UK

Who was the world's longest surviving dictator?

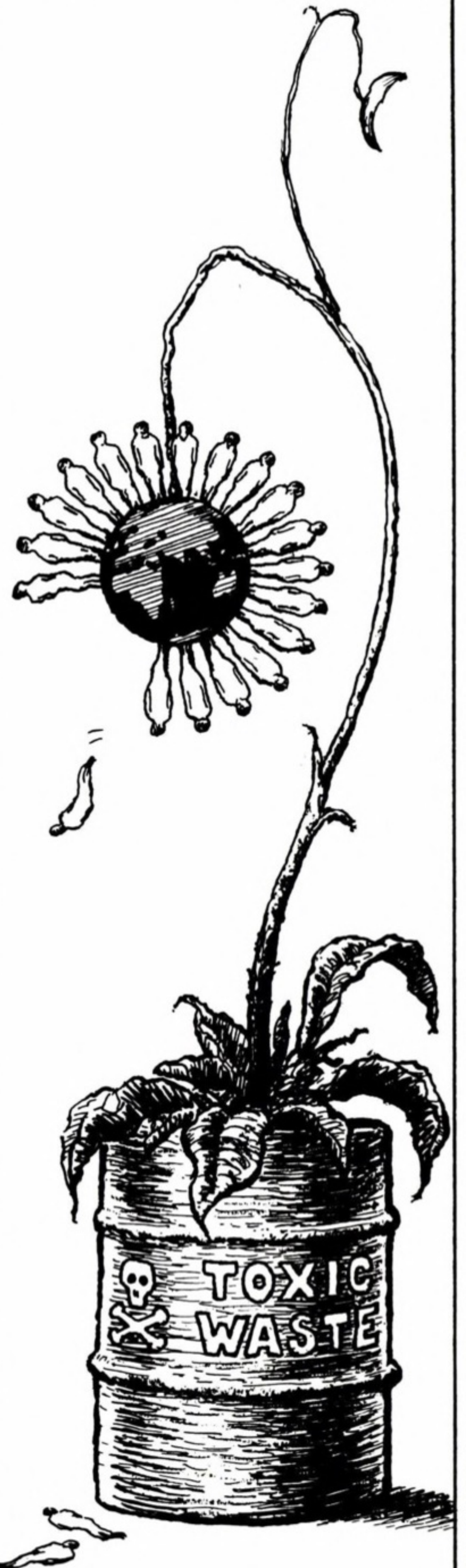
Paul Wells,
Truro, UK

If you have any questions please send them to Curiosities, New Internationalist, 55 Rectory Road, Oxford OX4 1BW, UK, or to your local NI office (see inside front cover for addresses).

GROWING PAINS

BY GUEST CARTOONIST

Chris Madden



Echo

'I'm going to find out the year my mother died and start from there.'
Emilia Laime tells Jenny Palmer of her plan to retrace her life.

'WE were orphans. Four sisters. There was another one but she died through lack of

care. Our mother died when I was about six, I think. I'll always remember the day – it was 2 August – when we got the news from the hospital. I'm not sure about the year. Soon after that my father left Bolivia for Argentina. He was away 12 years. When he came back I hardly recognized him.

'Anyway, for several years the four of us lived in one room, about two metres square. We had nothing. No money for food. And we didn't know how to cook. We had to steal to survive. Sometimes we lived on just biscuits and water.

'Our relatives would have nothing to do with us. We were too poor, you see. There were too many of us. And we didn't have a mother or father. Nobody would talk to us. We were outcasts, and we lived all alone in that house. Sometimes we would fight with each other out of frustration. There was some common land where people grew crops, so sometimes we would go out there and try to grow things to sell, but we didn't know much about agriculture.

'One day a tree fell on our house. It seemed like there was a curse on us. So suddenly we had nowhere to live. Our grandmother finally relented and took us in. So at least we had a roof over our heads. During that time she taught us how to cook, how to sew, how to clean. Three years later she died – and we were alone again. But at least, by then, we had learned how to live properly. We started thinking about our future lives.

'One day I announced that I wanted to become a nun. It seemed like the best thing. People had told me that I would never get married – being an orphan – or that if I did my husband would beat me. Or else I'd end up a prostitute. So I decided to join a convent. My elder sister Marguerita said to me: 'Don't get married and don't become a nun. It's not necessary.' I listened to her. I usually did. I realize now how clever she was. I'm 41 now and I'm happy and have plenty of friends. I fell in love once, but I didn't want to get married.

'While we were still living at my grandmother's we started going to school. But really we educated ourselves, my sisters and I. We would read together. We would write. Now we speak both Quechua and Spanish and can read and write in Spanish. I've read Domitila Barrios de Chungara's book *Let Me Speak*.

'When we left school we went to work in a small company. That was in the late 1960s. But the wages were low and the conditions awful. Sometimes we had to work right through the night. So 20 of us women decided to set up our own knitting co-operative, in our hometown of Arani near Cochabamba. We got a loan from another co-operative. That was 11 years ago and there are 56 of us working there now.



'Since then we have built up our market. Now we sell our jumpers to many parts of the world. But we

don't only do knitting. We do workshops as well. I'm in charge of the education workshops.

'Now that our father has come back to live with us, people talk to us – including our relatives. But I still remember the way they treated us before. I can't forget it. When I see children stealing in the street, I understand it. I remember that it was like that for us once, just because we did not have parents.

'Life is much better for us now. We work. We travel. Last week I flew to La Paz to find education materials for the workshop. It was the first time I had been on a plane.

'But I sometimes feel just as I did when I was a child. Last week, for example, I was followed by a man in La Paz. "You're not from here", he said. "Let's spend some time together." I told him I had things to do. But he kept following me. When I got home I found I had a notice stuck on my back. It said: "I am mad. Don't follow me". It must have been that man who put it there. That really upset me. I cried and cried when I found out.

'People will do anything these days. They'll steal your earrings out of your ears. I even heard a story about two men approaching a woman and pulling down her *pollera* (skirt) and robbing her while she was pulling it back up again. But what can you do when there are two of them?

'You have to be careful everywhere you go, especially if you are carrying money, as we are sometimes. My sister got robbed the other day. They snatched her bag. It was the money from the community. Now she will have to explain it to them.

'How our lives have changed, though! It was very bad at the beginning but it isn't now. We have stuck together in spite of everything. So now I'm going to write my story. I've already bought the notebooks. Once I start it isn't going to stop. I'm going to write about my childhood. Because things shouldn't be like that. I want people to know what it is like for people who are down on their luck and have no-one to turn to. I want them to think about what happens to children who have nothing.

'I'm going to find out about the year my mother died, and I'm going to start from there. I'm going to call it: *This is the life of echo*. Echo in Quechua means "scream when there is no-one around". It was my nickname once. On the front cover I'm going to draw an echo radiating outwards in the colours of the rainbow. That's the title and design. All I have to do now is write it.' ■

Emilia Laime works with her sisters at La Imilla sewing co-operative near Cochabamba, Bolivia. She told this story to **Jenny Palmer**, a British writer who revisited the four sisters she got to know six years ago.

ILLUSTRATION: CLIVE OFFLEY

Thailand

BANGKOK, once lauded as the 'Venice of the East' due to its canals, now has roads paved over most of its waterways and some of the world's worst traffic jams. Tourists expecting exotic, oriental scenes stand gasping rather than gazing amid swirling clouds of exhaust.

Thailand is trying to shed its image of sleaze, pollution, heroin, traffic jams and coups, but it's hard. True, the ruling junta did hold elections in March this year but Thailand lacks experience in democracy: there have been 17 coups and attempted coups since 1932. The elections may have brought fresh faces to the fore but the military retains its grip.

This country, the size of France, is at the hub of a resource-rich region which includes Myanmar (Burma), Laos, Cambodia and Vietnam. Its capital, Bangkok, competes with Singapore and other Asian capitals to attract the international companies pulling out of Hong Kong as the British colony nears its 1997 return to China's ownership. But Thailand is suffering from world recession, causing a slump in tourism and other vital industries.

This is bad enough, but the



being transformed into exotic pets or aphrodisiacs.

But there are challenges to the military, some from unlikely sources. A saffron-robed Buddhist monk, for example, is leading a protest against pollution, illegal logging and indiscriminate urban sprawl. He is Prachak Kuttachitto, an ecological Robin Hood, claiming his own Sherwood Forest – Dong Yai National Forest Reserve. He and a handful of monks say their faith means they must live in harmony with nature while teaching others to do the same. But it is not easy.

Conflicts, contradictions and no-win situations abound. The hill people in the opium-rich Golden Triangle were condemned by environmentalists when they switched from poppy production to cabbages, potatoes, fruit and coffee because this resulted in more land being used and caused soil erosion, deforestation and pesticide pollution.

Meanwhile, Thailand's once pristine shoreline is giving way to overbuilt towns and waste dumps and tourists are being advised to swim in hotel pools rather than risk the sewage-ridden sea water.

Richard S. Ehrlich

country is also facing an AIDS crisis, with an estimated 350,000 people HIV-positive. Nearly half a million men are thought to visit more than 200,000 female and male prostitutes every night throughout the country, generating about US \$4 billion for the sex industry. The Government is spending

millions on AIDS education.

Away from Bangkok, Thailand is trying to solve the problem of endangered animals, smuggled out of neighbouring countries with help from Thailand's drug gangs. Chained, caged or simply killed, these animals are fast disappearing from the region,

AT A GLANCE

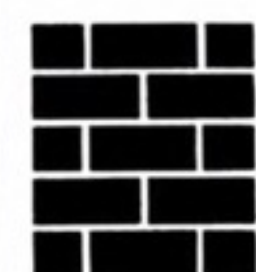
Excellent ★★★★★
Good ★★★★
Fair ★★★
Poor ★★
Appalling ★



INCOME DISTRIBUTION ★★

Growing gap between rich and poor; 25% live at subsistence level. Migration to cities.

1983: ★★



SELF-RELIANCE ★★★

Tourism and foreign investment, helped by saleable exports.

1983: ★★★



POSITION OF WOMEN ★★

Kept out of high positions of office; many poor women become prostitutes.

1983: ★★



POLITICS

Military junta with democratic face.



1983



LITERACY ★★★★★

85 % in Thai. Very high primary school enrolment.

1983: ★★★★★



FREEDOM ★★

Self-censorship by press.

1983: ★★



LIFE EXPECTANCY ★★★

67 years (US 76 years). Improvements from better medical care now threatened.

1983: ★★

Leader King Bhumibol Adulyadej (Rama IX). Nation Peace Keeping Council military junta leader: General Sunthorn Kongsompong. Prime Minister: General Krapayoon Suchinda.

Economy GNP per capita US \$1,220 (US \$20,910).

Monetary unit: Baht.

Major exports are rice, rubber, tapioca, prawns, tin, sugar, integrated circuits, precious stones, textiles. Sent to EC, US, Japan and ASEAN countries (Association of South East Asian Nations).

People 55.7 million.

Health Infant mortality 26 per 1,000 live births (US 9 per 1,000).

Culture Thailand was never colonized, but the Japanese occupied it during World War Two. Eighty-five per cent of the people are Thai, 12 per cent Chinese and the rest hill tribe groups and others.

Religion: Ninety-five per cent Buddhist, four per cent Muslim, one per cent Christian.

Language: Thai

Sources: The State of World Population 1992, The State of the World's Children 1992, Bank of Thailand and information supplied by author.

Last profiled in March 1983

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Publisher's Note - Roger Jackson, the author of this detailed publication, has spent the last 8 years actually doing all of these things. Now he has written this guide showing how anyone 16-40 years old can enjoy similar experiences. **And enhance your CV & job prospects when you return. Order now - you won't regret it!**

For your copy of **THE YEAR OFF HANDBOOK** send cheque/PO for £9.95 (includes P&P) to: **Sabre Publishing Ltd, Sabre House, 129 Mercers Road, London N19 4PX.** Or telephone 071-281 9181 (24 hrs) for credit card orders.

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INTERNATIONAL HUMANITY

Much-travelled folk soon discover that, wherever they are in the world, basic human nature and basic human needs are the same. All peoples need a sufficiency of food and clothing, proper housing and hygienic conditions in which to live. Apart from that for real happiness they need freedom of thought, of association and of movement. They need to be able to read and say what they like and above all they need friendly relationships, affection, love, trust and an absence of the fear that others will harm them. Theosophy or the Ancient Wisdom teaches that spiritually all men are of one family owing reasonable allegiance to each other. This seems like right thinking. To know more about Theosophy write to: *The Blavatsky Trust (N2), Avalon, Little Weston, Yeovil BA22 7HP.*

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Contact: Johanna Jackson, 2 Horsebrook Cottages, Avonwick, Devon, TQ1 09EU. 0364 73937
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WORK for PEACE

THE Peace Pledge Union is looking for volunteers to help with a variety of work in our central London office (lunch and help with travelling expenses provided). There are also many ways to work for peace in your own area.

To find out more, please write to: Peace Pledge Union (NI), Dick Sheppard House, 6 Endsleigh Street, London WC1H 0DX, or telephone: 071-387 5501.

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DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR

To design and implement a strategy that will further increase our support and effectiveness in countries and regions where we have new offices. The Development Director will also help us develop support structures in regions where we are not yet represented. Responsibilities include drafting and implementing development plans, setting up and supporting national offices, fundraising, communication, staffing, budgeting and networking with NGOs and governments. The job holder will represent the new regions in the management team. The job requires frequent travel. The ideal candidate would meet these criteria:

- good understanding of issues relating to the environment, development and peace;
- experience with translating this understanding into clear plans and objectives;
- extensive network of contacts in international and national NGOs in non-OECD countries.

Both job holders must convince us that they have the following additional abilities:

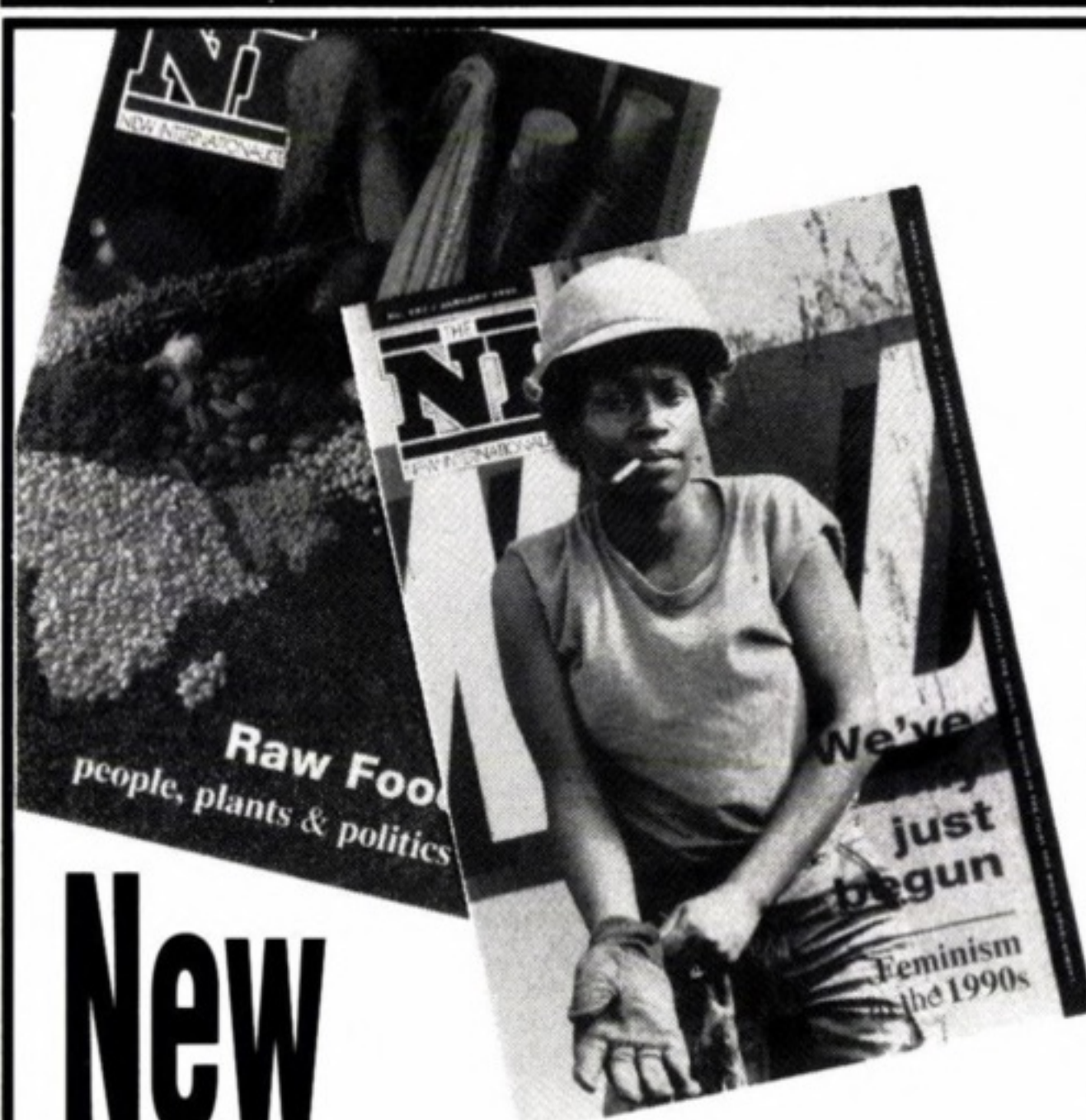
- proven leadership success in international and highly dynamic work environments
- wide experience in people management, cross cultural sensitivity
- excellent communication skills, fluent English, probably fluency in other world languages as well
- commitment to team work.

We realise we are asking for a lot. In return we offer a reasonable salary and benefits package (including relocation assistance) and, more importantly, an exciting and satisfying organisation working for one of the most important causes of our time.

If you are certain that you meet our criteria, please include in English a comprehensive CV including referees and an application letter to: Rodger O'Connell, Human Resource Coordinator, Greenpeace International, Keizersgracht 176, 1016 DW Amsterdam, Netherlands. The closing date for applications is 12th June, 1992. Interviews will be conducted in Amsterdam in the week beginning 6th July, 1992.

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4NN6A

The FOOD Book

Recipes from Africa, Asia and Latin America for Western kitchens with country information and food facts.

HOW about cooking Latin American tonight? Try *chiles en nogada* (peppers in walnut sauce) or spicy beef with almonds. Have some avocado salad and corn cake on the side, with a glass of passion fruit juice to drink ...

Some of the best cooking in the world goes on day after day in the villages of Africa and the Middle East, the hills of the Andes, and on the plains of India. Now collected together in this **NI Food Book** are some of the world's tastiest dishes for you to cook at home.

Full of wholesome, economical dishes (and a few more lavish ones), tested and adapted for Western cooks, this practical hard-cover book looks good too. Colour plates set off the mouth-watering recipes which are set out by region and by course. Black and white photographs and smaller illustrations vividly bring to life the people and countries behind the food. Features on the history of food; the world's ten basic staple foods; a glossary; and anecdotal introductions to each recipe give the New Internationalist perspective which makes this cookbook special to read as well as to cook from.

The simple step-by-step cooking method and range of fully-indexed recipes means that the **NI Food Book** is practical for beginners as well as experienced cooks. At this price it makes an ideal gift for you, your friends and family, and when you buy three or more (sent to one address) you will receive a pack of 10 full-colour Third World Greetings Cards worth £3.95/\$11.90. The **NI Food Book** (192pp) measures 8½" x 8½" and each one is individually boxed to arrive in perfect condition.

So, roll up your sleeves and fill in the reply slip, sending it together with your cheque/money order payable to New Internationalist. Good food, good pictures, good facts – this is the perfect cookbook for you, your friends, relations, colleagues...

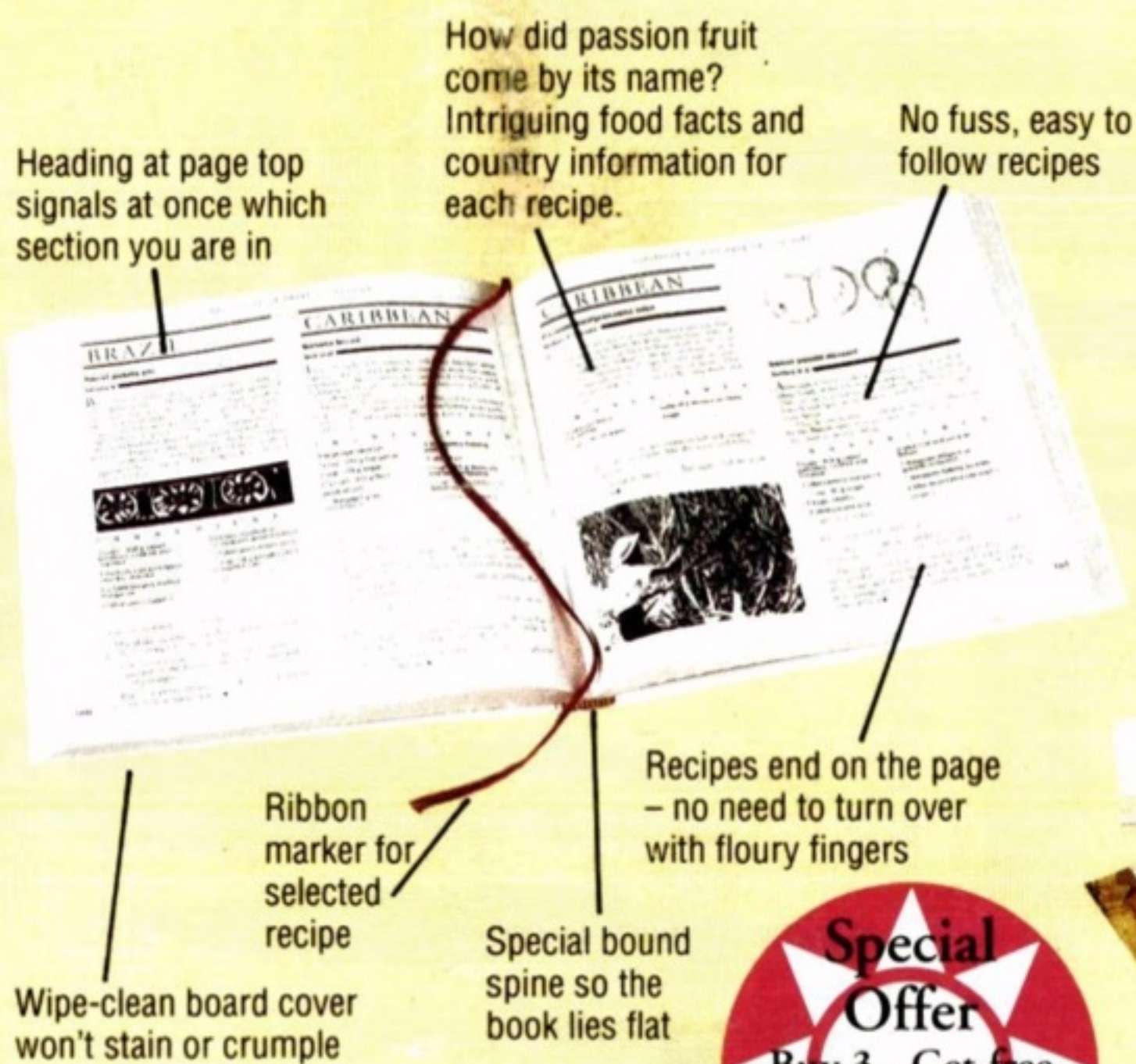


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"The NI Food Book takes you on a remarkable excursion around the world. There are some 200 wonderful recipes which can easily be followed in our own kitchens." Glenys Kinnock, chair of One World.



- ★ Over 200 recipes – wide variety of fascinating meals to cook.
- ★ Clear step-by-step cooking method.
- ★ Recipes and ingredients adapted for Western kitchens.
- ★ Personally-introduced recipes from NI readers.
- ★ Notes on healthy eating.
- ★ Economical dishes – time-saving and practical too.
- ★ New or unusual things to try (OK, so *gado-gado* is not new to you!)
- ★ Colour covers, 10 colour plates, and map.



NI FOOD BOOK

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- ★ Top-quality black and white photos and illustrations showing people and places behind the food.
- ★ Two full indexes, by **region** and by **ingredient**.
- ★ History of food including how foods travelled, women's work as farmers: distinctive NI background information.

The Food Book is published in Canada in conjunction with Second Story Press, Toronto.

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